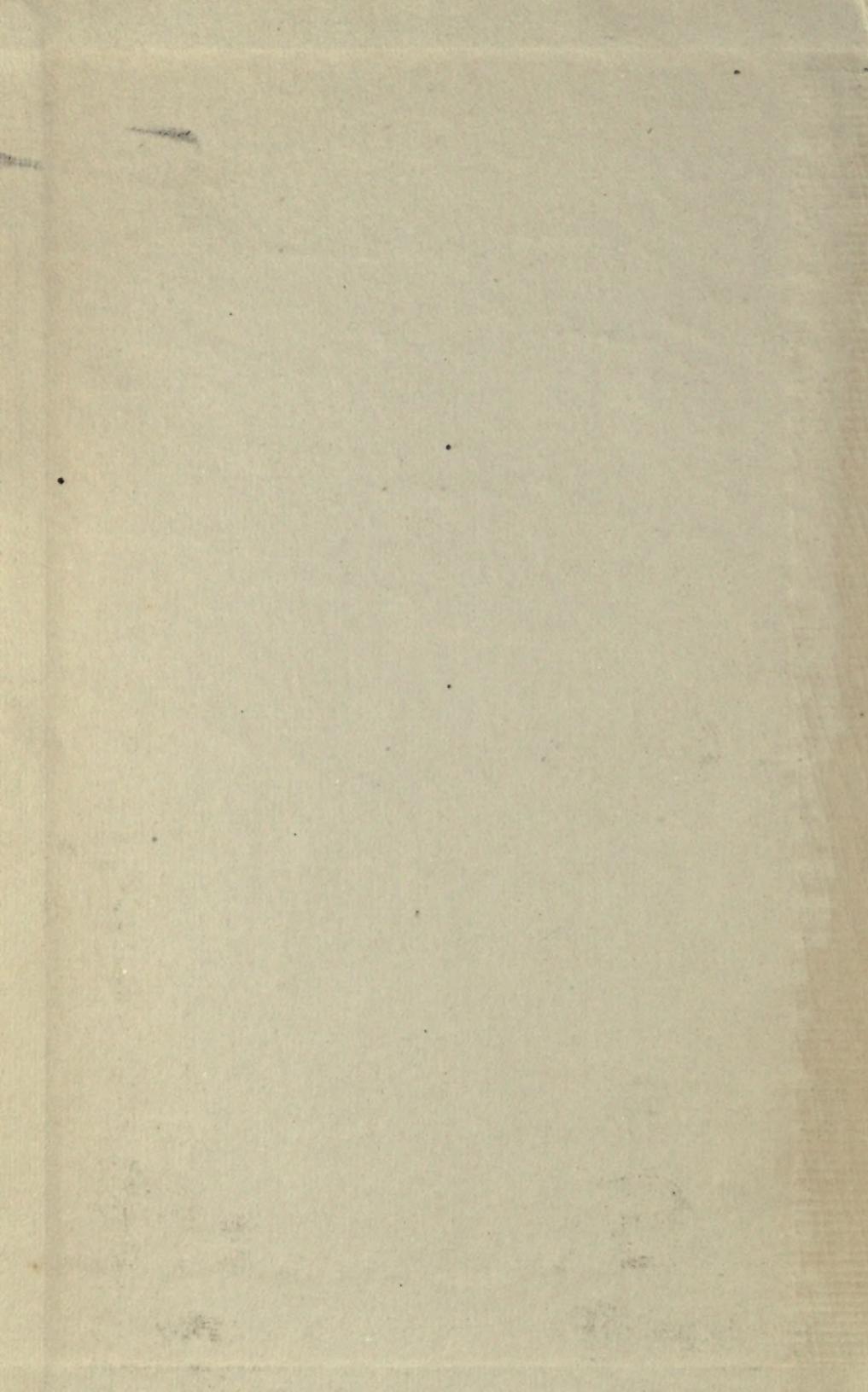
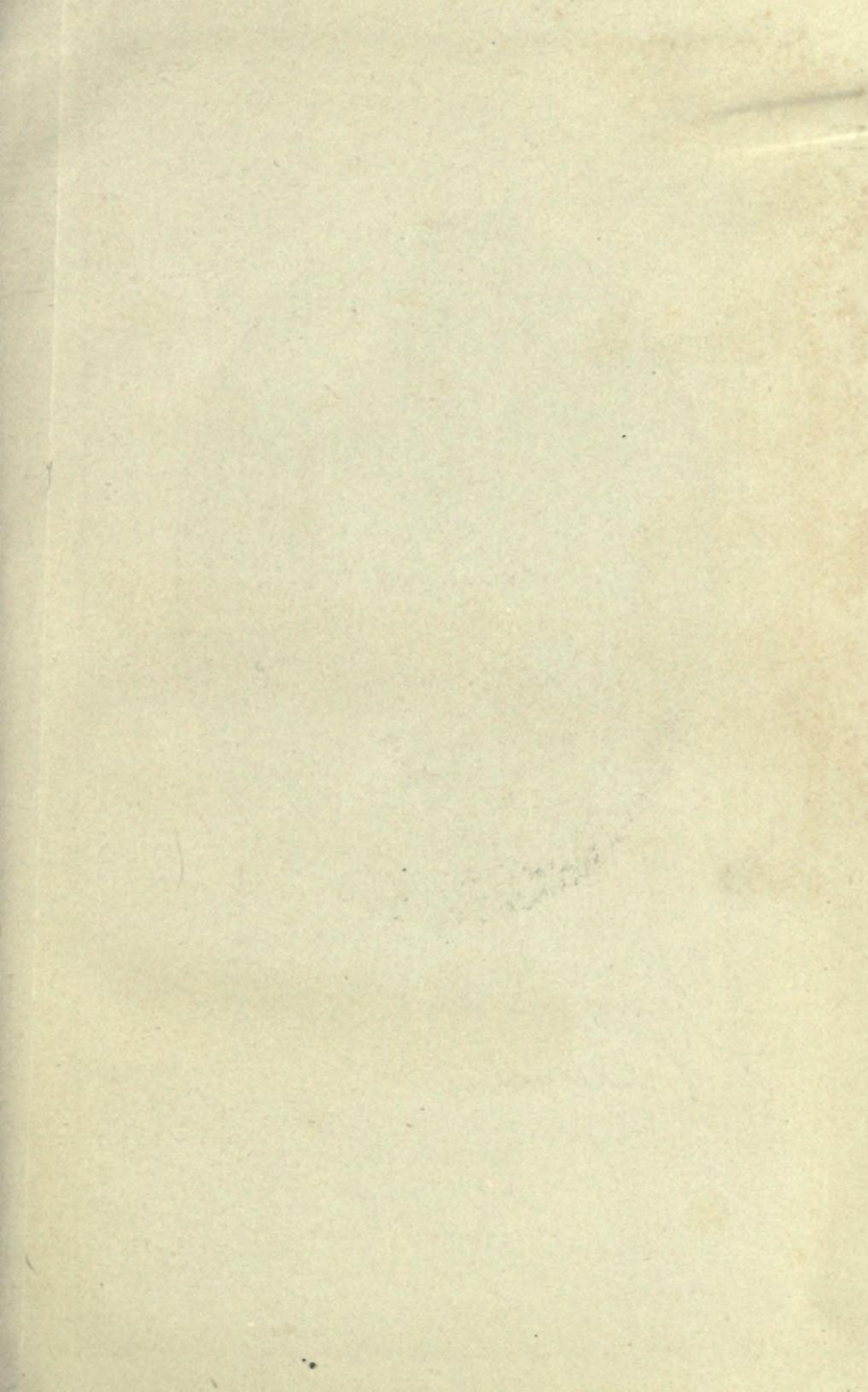


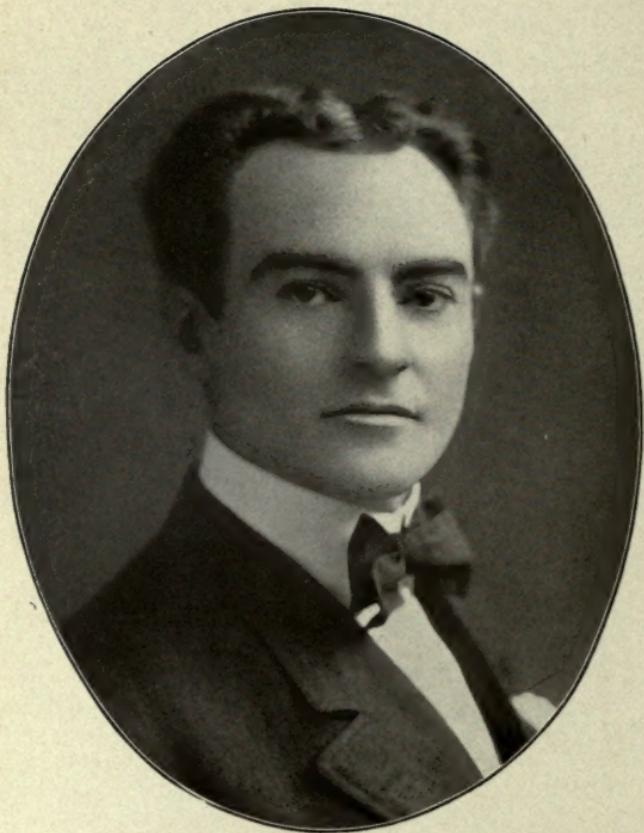
TORCH OF REASON



BERRY







Years in the Revolution,
Frederick Forrest Berry.

The
Torch *of* Reason
Or
Humanity's God



The Torch of Reason
Cloth bound, 12 illustrations, per copy, \$1.00
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January, 1912

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* Where this asterisk (*) appears, preceding a paragraph in the 11th chapter of this story, it indicates that the entire paragraph so marked is one of several whole paragraphs arbitrarily striken out of the magazine serial, without the author's knowledge or permission, and subsequent to his having read and edited the galley proofs. These paragraphs, together with all the other parts censored and omitted, incorrectly printed and otherwise mutilated and discredited, I have taken great pains to revise, correct and incorporate in this book. Herein you will find THE TORCH OF REASON as originally written and edited by myself, including both verse and prose composition.

F. F. BERRY.

“I Will Be True.”

Were I to let this opportunity pass without avail-
ing myself of it to thank those faithful comrades
who have stood staunchly by me through this long,
painful travail, I would be an ingrate indeed.

Had those for whom I have labored proven true
to their trust with me and the cause that shall have
my life, this book would long ago have been printed
and read by thousands, and thousands of new con-
verts might thereby have been added to our army
of peace and love. But I forgive my enemies, for
they are the product of the System, and a traitorous
environment having turned their hearts to stone,
they are more to be pitied than censured, and they
will find greater punishment than I could wish them,
in the canker of their own cowardice that will never
cease to eat into their poor misguided souls.

Those who have tried to help THE TORCH OF
REASON are many, and those who *have* helped are
many more. The army is increasing and will rise
like an ocean tide until it shall prove what this
book foretells. All these heroic comrades I thank
and appreciate, especially do I wish to thank my
good friend and comrade, Peter Herbert, of Cincin-
nati, through whose unselfish generosity and finan-
cial backing it becomes possible for me to bring out
this volume. After all others had failed me, Com-
rade Herbert stepped into the gap and supplied the
cash with which to bring out the first edition.

The illustrations in this book were created for the
author by our rising young artist, Roy Legault, a
graduate of the G. H. Lockwood School of Art, Kala-
mazoo, Michigan. Any patronage extended to this
struggling young genius will, in addition, be a favor
conferred on our entire movement. His address is
2073 East Washington St., Portland, Oregon.

F. F. B.

Warning!

(It is our plain duty to push this book and to do it NOW! There is a cloud of war's red hell gathering over this fair land. It is not too late to dispel it—will you do your duty? Will you sell ONE copy of this book?)

We warn you that this book is a *revelation*. It is not only a *revelation*, but it is a *revolution!* It is an iconoclast. It is a pillar of oasian fire, burning like a volcano alone in a desert of midnight blackness. Every sentence is a meteor. Every paragraph is a meteoric shower, and every chapter is a volume of life history, throbbing with the surcharge of realism and truth.

Many books have gone before; but this book blazes a new trail. This book is not an advocate of the paliatives of reform. It advocates, not reform, but *new form*. There are no soup-house mediatives advocated here. The “full dinner-pail” and “patched pants” philosophers will find cloudy weather in the perspective of this literary Vesuvius. The war fiend and battle hero will crumple up and pale before the continuous cannonade of this resistless intellectual Krupp.

Unless you are prepared for shocks don't read this terrific book. Unless you can stand a jolt take no chances with its logic. If you are bound to read only what the race has been fed on and starved on since the invention of fire, turn not another page, lest you violate the injunctions of the dead and desecrate the codes and screeds of a civilization

which nested in trees and eaves. If you read this book it will open your eyes.

This creative volume is not a Billiken of "things as they are." It is not a confirmation, but a *repudiation!* It follows naught, but *leads all*. It is a god of things, not as they are, but *as they ought to be*. It smashes the idols. It strikes down the Golden Calf. It blasts the dollar sign. It cauterizes the guillotine and torture chamber, and strikes off the fetters of superstition and fear.

The author of this book is a man. If you admire a coward you will not fall in love with him. He has dared to have his say. He has had the courage to stand alone. He has spoken out from the wilderness, and his voice shall be heard forsooth from the very housetops. He has placed man above the dollar. He has painted from life. His models have lived and breathed and suffered the long travail that portends the birth of the new world that is to be. This artist's brush is a flaming torch, and his soul is a fountain of love-fire—unquenchable and exhaustless.

This mighty book speaks the truth. If you love a lie read no further. If you prefer your chains lay it down now. If you are satisfied with life as you see it, then you are not ready for THE TORCH OF REASON, and its light of truth would only blind you. This book will awaken you from your fanciful dream of Fairyland to a realization of your plain duty to your fellow men. But if you yearn for industrial freedom; if you love liberty; if you crave justice for all human society, then read this wonderful book and arm yourself with knowledge and reason and fit yourself for the change that is at our doors, the change that shall mean peace and love and joy for all mankind.

THE PUBLISHERS.

Author's Apology!

If I must write a preface, let me tell a story—a true story. Personally, I do not like prefaces. They remind me of index fingers on guide-boards, and explanatory footnotes and artists' "keys," by means of which is supposed to be conveyed intelligence to the effect that, "this be a hoss."

So, I promise to write this foreword and I trust you will agree to forgive me, not for what I have said in the book, but for what I am going to say in this that you are now reading.

I remember the first Fourth of July I ever "had." It was away back there on the dear hills of old New Hampshire when I was but five years old. They brought me home from the village a toy pistol that cost a cent, together with a box of paper caps which cost another cent! That made my first Independence celebration cost two cents!

Going some in "patriotism," says you—a whole two cents' worth for a whole year! But in those days patriotism was cheap and enjoyed by all. That was before "patriotism" became an auxiliary to the trusts.

I never forgot that Fourth of July celebration. We lived many miles from the village, and when the cannon boomed down there, I would fire off my pistol! The cannon went "boom," and my pistol went "putt!"

I have that cent pistol still; and whenever I want an "inspiration," I get out that ancient toy gun and think.

You may not believe it, but that little cent toy pistol is the thing which inspired me to write this book.

Maybe I didn't feel some brave when I answered that cannon's "boom" with my little "putt!" But then, I was only a boy, and you must forgive me!

The years rolled on. I grew out of the "putting" stage and then I became a Socialist. One day I was looking at that little toy pistol, all rusty, where it had once been painted red, and no longer capable even of a "putt," and while my thoughts were sadly harking back over the painful years to that two-cent Fourth of July celebration of the long ago, I resolved to take a shot at Capitalism, the historic foe of Humanity.

This time it was my determination to "boom" instead of "putting." If I have succeeded, I am sorry that I made no greater noise. And if I have "putted" instead of "booming," I regret that I did not use a Gatling-gun or a thirteen-inch cannon, both of which will shortly be used on us unless we wake up and get together before 1914.

There are both "putters" and "boomers;" and if I am still in the former class, I apologize for not having been a better student in my master's school.

If my shot struck home and wrung a pain, I regret that it did not kill. If I have rescued one hapless soul from the bloody claws of the cruel Beast, I grieve that I did not shoot before. My aim was at Ignorance, Superstition and Slavery; have

I hit one of these? Then I beg forgiveness for not having killed all three.

If you, my brother and my sister, will take the trail and follow the Beast by the blood I have made him spill; if you will camp on his trail early and late trying as hard to run him down as I have tried to get this shot into him, I will load up, and by the time you run him around this way again, I will be ready for him with a "dum-dum." Keep the scent hot, there is no time to lose.

I have given you THE TORCH OF REASON, but I cannot make you see. I am one of you, and I can look ahead of you; but I am *not* you. You must look for yourself. I can call to you, but I cannot make you come. If you would be free you yourself must strike the blow. If you would know Justice, you must first reason. If you would reason, you must first think.

If none had ever used the mental processes of reasoning the race never would have progressed one inch away from the cave and the tree nest. Green pastures are not discovered by satisfied cattle. If no man had ever broken a law to obey *The Law*, the workers would still be wearing neck yokes and ankle balls under booted and spurred drivers with "blacksnake" and pistol.

Socialism is in violation of law—the law of private ownership in human flesh. Socialism will break that law, to write upon the books in its stead the law of *social ownership of the earth*. Socialism will break the law which legalizes profit from human toil. It will abrogate the instrument of legalized robbery of unearned riches, and give freedom of

possession to the useful worker of the full value of his hands' creation.

There are many reasons why I am a Socialist. First, it is because of my great selfishness. I want to be happy. Not being able to satisfy this selfish desire under the present arrangement, and knowing that Socialism means perfect selfishness, I naturally lean toward the light of my heart's desire. But the selfishness of which I am speaking to-day is sure to be misunderstood. I realize that any attempt at an explanation of this greater selfishness at this time were well nigh impossible of comprehension. It is only the "charity" faker who parades before the footlights bedecked in his spangled garb of "unselfishness."

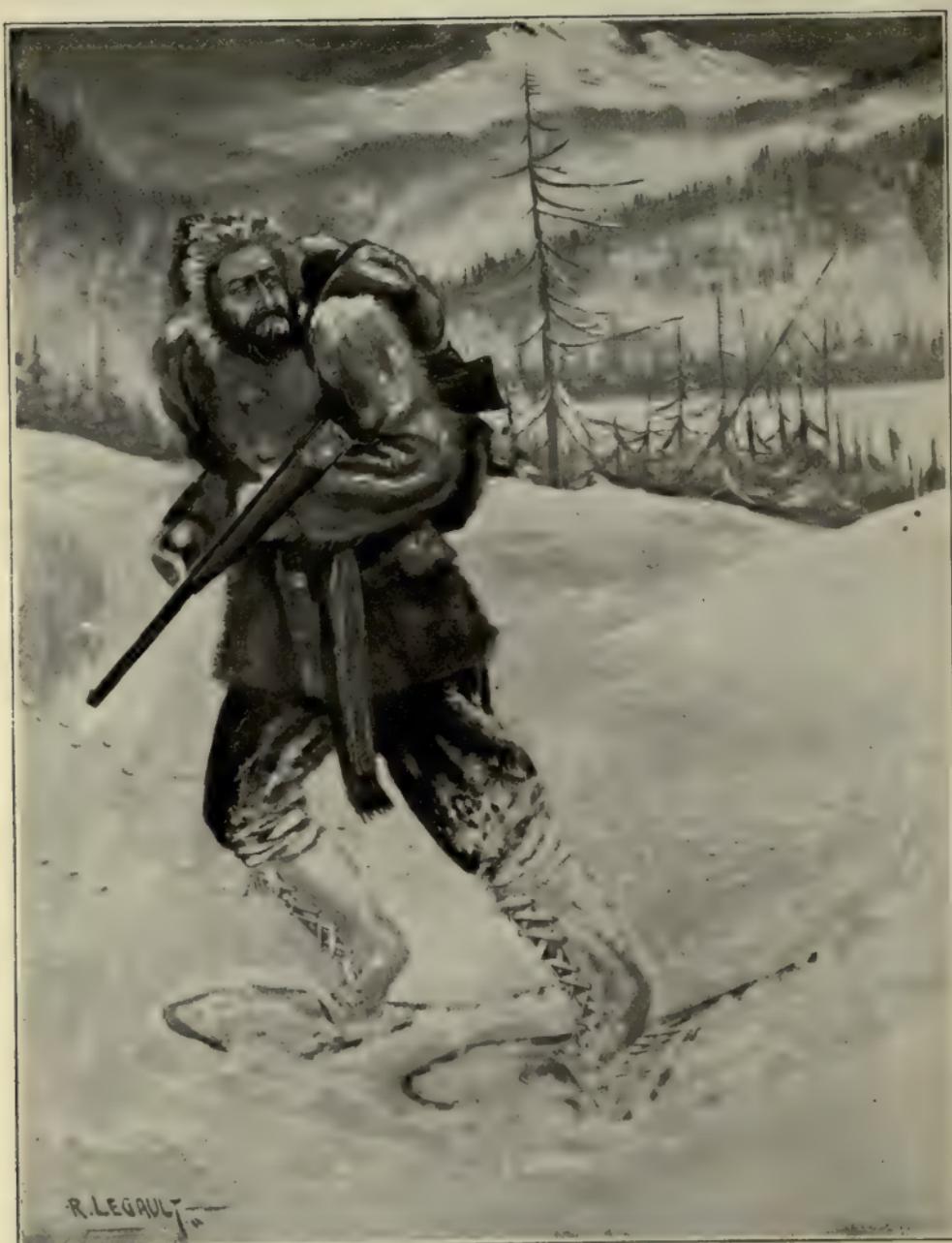
In a world of riches and poverty, great may be the harpings on "greed and selfishness." To be perfectly selfish is to be perfectly happy. To be perfectly happy is to be perfectly well pleased. No real sane individual may be perfectly happy in a world where there sorrows one unhappy brother or sister. Possessed I all the wealth in the world, I would still be the most unhappy person living; for then I would know that no one else owned anything, and the misery of their poverty would destroy all my peace of mind. But were it possible for me to know that every human creature on earth smiled happily and secure in the fullness of a life of peace, plenty and love, and that I were an economic equal in the enjoyment of the same opportunities for life's full measure, then indeed would I be perfectly happy. This, then, would be perfect selfishness achieved.

For ten years I have been trying to think of the right way by which to reach that peculiar intelligence which refuses an audience to Truth. There are enough good and scientific books on Socialism to convert the world in a day; but they are, for the most part, dry and hard to read. At least, they are hard to *get read*. In THE TORCH OF REASON I have tried to come to the rescue of the prejudiced mind. I have written something that I feel will be read. It was my aim to blaze a new trail, far and away from the beaten paths of all conventional Socialistic propoganda.

This book contains a warning to both Socialists and trade-unionists. Also I have dared to fill the toil-wrung heart with the promise of a better time by taking the reader into the future—the very near future. Dangers have been pointed out wherever seen. If they are not heeded in time, pardon me if I blame you for the crime of inertia, for my duty is well begun and if you fail to use the weapon I have placed in your hands, I am willing to take the judgment with a clean conscience and unafraid.

In giving you this book I have not counted the cost. If I am criticised unfavorably I shall know that I have trod upon a corn. If I have hurt your feelings, then your feelings were ripe for the hurting. If flesh were not heir to pain the body would destroy itself for lack of precaution. So if I have made you weep, think. If I have made you laugh, think. If I have made you think, think again—**THEN ACT!**

THE AUTHOR.



"A giant shadow, bended with the weight of an eighty-pound pack, stopped in the snow and listened!"

CHAPTER I.

WOLVES!

Alas for life—the best I knew—
The day is done;
Pause not for me, nor error rue,
But call my son.

Up from the black swamp in the valley
and into the chill silence tore an unearthly
and terrifying yell.

A giant shadow, bended with the weight
of an eighty pound pack, stopped in the
snow and listened.

Again the blood-curdling cry split the
night; this time from a different quarter.

The shadow heard, and nodded, wisely.

Still once again came the doleful, agonizing
plaint, in a long-drawn-out wail, like the
cadence of despair up from some cavern-
throated chasm of lost souls! Up, up it
soared, rocket-like, resonantly wooing its
dizzy goal with lute-noted affinity; then
spent and subsiding, slid back to earth and
lost itself in a dying, gutteral moan.

Again the shadow heard and nodded.
Then turning heavily in the snow looked
back in the direction of the little cabin left
behind. The shadow knew! It was the
dreaded Call of the Wolf!

It was fifty below zero. The night was still
unto death. So still and inert was all in earth
and above earth that the redundant silence

was palpitant with terror at its own magnificence. Long and motionless the shadow paused and listened; but all was still again, for silence reigns supreme at the top of the world, and the only voice of the Silence is the conjugal voice of Death.

Then up from the valley and over the bleak desert of silent rest swept the multi-throated yelp of the wolf-pack. There was no mistaking it, that wild, discordant chorus which freezes the blood with a song that spells the traveler's doom. The shadow heard and smiled. Not sweetly, babe-like, but grimly and cruelly like the triumphant smile of the suicide. Like the gambler's smile when, the victim taking a last chance on a final throw, gamely loses. 'Twas the smile of conquest. The smile that lifts the scornful lip of the unwhipped fighter with a sneer of defiance—the smile that challenges Death!

Jason Sands was not born yesterday. The poise of head and flash of eye were marks of discipline undergone in a cruel school and at the hands of a cruel master. This was not the first time he had heard the hated wolf-cry. He had faced danger many times in his day, and he had come to know it for what it was worth and could face it unafraid. For twenty years danger had been his constant companion; and he boasted he could sense it in advance—intuitively, as it were—with an inscrutable

intuition that baffled even himself, but which never failed him.

Right or wrong, he had come to look upon death and the menace of death as part and parcel of life itself, and scornfully he invaded its most sacred precincts; violated its most inviolable creeds; scoffed at its immutable mandates and contemptuously defied rather than feared it.

What was this thing Death, anyway? Why should one be hounded through life making preparations for a thing known to be inevitable, only to flee from it in terror when met with face to face? If the souls of men—predamned—were to be “saved” from death everlasting, or “damned” with life everlasting, as the case might be, what in hell was the use fretting to keep up appearances?

If to be wafted heavenward, or sluiced hellward, were at the optional whim of the Heavenly Father who, being responsible for our beginning and end, had it all cut and dried beforehand just what our fate was to be, all one might offer by way of protest must be simply so much hot air. Thus he reasoned; and he would not prostitute his splendid manhood in venial supplications to a juryless court that never convened and from which there could be no appeal.

Death? Ha! It would have to show him! Besides, he was ready for it, and for

the final struggle with it; for had he not whipped it on more than one occasion already? Yes, a dozen times, single-handed and alone. It were the strong who won life from the battle of life, and he was strong. True, the battle might not be nice, but it was on, and had been raging for many a year. In fact, it was here when he came and was not of his making. He was a victim of it, a creature of environment.

His forty summers he preferred to designate as "forty frosts;" for summers and sunshine were for the idlers, and not for such as he. These were things he had come to know.

Having lived in twenty-eight states in the union, circled the globe twice and not having been born blind, there were things he had seen! He had pillow'd his head on live goose-down in the palaces of affluence, and he had slept under the wharf with the rats. Also he had pillow'd his head on the bosom of woman; but that was a memory of other days, days in the toyland of life when the world was small and sweet, and when love was sweet and young. Moreover, his flesh had quivered at the numbing drive of keen-edged steel, and the white-hot pain in the sting of "cold lead" was known to him.

The man was a giant and possessed a giant's strength and courage. Also he possessed spirit, and an indomitable character,

neither to be humbled nor cajoled. These splendid characteristics were ever being mistaken by fools for ugliness and a natural avidity for being on the "off side."

No more appreciated and none the less creditable, was his finely tuned sense of justice; and whenever he would fight rather than submit to tyranny, these "little people," as he called them—men and women of tight-screwed mentality—hastened to brand him "trouble-maker and disorderly person."

But here was a man—one man—who would not be cut down to fit their pigmy habitations. Here was a man living large and broad in spite of want and oppression. Their narrow codes and commandments could not encompass him; for he loved the music of the living spheres, and the limitations of human brotherhood were bounded only by the limitations of the cosmic realm.

He knew Nature, and he loved her ways and deeds. Understanding her voice and living by her plan, they were companions, roaming the world together and singing the unsung songs of their unknown and silent love.

Here was a man who could carve a habitation from the virgin forest, rear, and furnish it, with the aid of but a single tool. Here was a man who both wrote and sang songs. And out in the world which knew him not, many little children sang the songs

he had written; but he knew the world, for it had broken his heart and driven him over the mountains and over the snows to try the one thing left him, the mining of gold.

Not that he wanted the gold for the sake of it as riches, such were miserly motives and tended to decay; but men had made laws compelling each other to get gold or starve, and without which the things of life piled high in the marts were unobtainable.

He had earned much gold. Also, he had done some starving, off and on, with the result that life had been, not life at all, but ever a fruitless grind.

Political parties had come and gone, but Poverty had remained. The years had left him older and poorer.

He had sweltered in their mills and on their railroads, on their ships and in their offices; the sum total of which being that he had grown older and poorer, more friendless and unloved, discredited and despised. And so, the dividend on all the investment had been: Age and poverty, poverty and old age and insecurity, homelessness, hopelessness, and death only awaiting him at the end of the trail. Added to all this like a nightmare had come the awakening consciousness of having been but a submissive, though unwilling, wage slave.

So much in passing for the man-shadow that loomed powerful and alert under the growing gray of the Arctic dawn, listening

to the hunger-cry of the wolf-pack rising out of the dismal swamp in the valley. Why, then, should he fear them? Besides, was he not a dead shot? Then let them try it on. He would fool them.

"Why don't you come for me, my pretty darlings?" he sneered. Then after a moment's listening: "I wonder what God's gray angels are up to off there in that damned swamp! I didn't come that way and haven't made any noise. Besides, that's to windward and they could not have scented me from there." As the raving confusion grew fainter and more to the northeast, he continued: "I know it can't be Ben, and I hate to think it's the mail up from Dawson to Gold City; but if it is, he's off his trolley by more than two hundred miles, and I'm thinking this will be about his last trip. Well, by the time they've eaten him and his outfit I'll be over the ridge, and by the time they've slept it off I'll be out of hearing and beyond the reach of their cunning smellers, if the wind don't shift, which isn't likely; there's too little of it. Anyway, four hundred miles is not so far, so if that choir of pious-eyed hell-hounds don't head me off and if it don't thaw, I'll be about right with the boat if she leaves Dawson on schedule time. There's plenty of grub, too, my dawny-hued beauties, so whenever you're ready to start something I'll stay with you for a while, I promise you."

Reaching up over his head to the top of the pack, he felt out the five boxes of cartridges to make sure they were still there where he knew he had packed them. Once more defiantly, though unconsciously smiling, he turned a last time to listen to the hunt-mad demons, then sarcastically soliloquized: "Whoever you are, old-timer, I'd like to be in with you when the curtain goes up. We'd make 'em go some while lead and liver lasted; but it seems to me a man with the brains of a Burbank Seedling would have fought shy of rabbit swamps getting in here, and you'll learn! I did. These free-for-all fights, you know, tend to 'bring out the best in us'; and all you have to do is 'be good and you'll be happy!' I guess you're in for it, old sport, so cheer up, and let the best brute win! And, you know," he rambled on, "if you're a good Christian gentleman, 'God will be with you,' which promise ought to be consolation enough for any man to take with him into the stomachs of five hundred wolves!"

"Poor cuss!" he reflected a moment later. "He's lost, most probably, and there's absolutely no hope for him. But why should it concern me? I couldn't help him if I would, he's too far away. My dear, Christian mother taught me to mind my own business and let well enough alone; 'climb to the top, beat the other fellow to it and get the cream!' 'Be satisfied with your lot,

Jasie, and don't go borrowing trouble.' Worse luck! The neighbors hereabouts are too far apart!"

Thus winding up his satirical harangue, the hardened miner hunched the sagging pack higher between his great shoulders, wound his sinewy arms around his rifle and bit into the frozen end of the Arctic trail.

His course lay to the southwest, sixteen days—snowshoe time—from the "Broken Bone." But he had allowed four days extra for good measure and possible accidents, planning his supplies accordingly. Once at Dawson, he would bid farewell to the frozen dome of earth forever. With the little dust stowed away in the pack, he would go back to the world where the sun shines and where the roses bloom; settle up with the few friends who had proven true, attend to another matter of long standing, and close the books.

Four years back while prospecting alone he had fallen in a mad flight down the mountain, trying to escape a down-coming slide, and broken the tibia of his left leg. Notwithstanding the solitude and cold, coupled with the danger from wolves and starvation, he battled on through the long winter months, successfully mending his broken leg, and winning one more signal victory over the courtesan queen of the spectral kingdom. Later, he found gold in the very slide that had caused him so much

suffering, as if the hand of fate would expiate the wrong with the wonted yellow balm. And thus it was that the "Broken Bone" mine came to be born and named.

At the top of the world life is a rare and lonesome thing. But life is full of hope, and a grim tenacity to be, and to master death. It is a fighting life and a living fight. It is a fight that neither begs nor gives quarter. It is win or lose with the winning or losing of life or death. "Thumbs down," that's the symbol, and to a finish! There is no arbitration here. There is "nothing to arbitrate." Speech is an asset not to be squandered idly where Justice cowers in her citadel behind the law of self-preservation.

Man, like the eaters of flesh and drinkers of blood, must rise above the law or under it go down. It was the weak that went down, but Jason Sands was not weak. He not only obeyed the law, but also he interpreted, aye, *dictated it!*

Morning broke still and gray. Like a gyroscope, the crystal dome or earth careened, dipping its southern rim awash in a flood of crimson glory. 'Twas like a painted ship on a painted ocean, feathering her lee rail in the trough of a fancied sea. The scarlet sun, like a toy balloon, would float lazily for a space along the frosty fringe of the boreal circle, then roll over the edge as the world tipped back, disap-

pearing in his rosy robe like the spotlight queen of the fairy fire-dancers.

Jason knew the day would be short, and he would make the most of it, camping at first sign of dusk, this would mean twenty hours of constant snowshoeing without a break for rest or sleep.

Fifty miles at least, he figured, had been eaten out of the four hundred. "Three hundred and fifty left—fifty at a slap—eight camps and there you are, Jason, old hoss, and you're good for it or you're a piker, and you know you're there with the goods," he said aloud. Paus-ing to gaze down into the bottoms country off to the left slope of the ridge, he broke out savagely: "Oh, you yellow-hearted sin-ners! Whose mother's darling have you torn from his red bones this time? You may swarm your swamps and I will not molest you. Give me the ridges where the footing is better and I will pick no fuss with you."

The weather was fine, clear and dry and cold.

The day wore on.

With the western sky ablur with purple twilight, lower crouching from strain of pack and trail, and heavy with oncoming sleep, the titanic Jason bent on toward the sound of falling water that leaped and foamed through a rocky gorge and plunged a thousand feet among the ice-terraced rocks below. He knew the location, having

prospected and camped there during the summer of 1906.

The trembling thunder of the falls grew louder as the distance shortened and the top of the white world and the bottom of the sombre sky drew together; and ere the dusky nightmaids had pursed their purple curtain overhead, Jason Sands had drunk his fill of the icy water, that thickened in the tin cup like slivered glass. He gazed about the falls with puzzled scrutiny, shook his head gravely, then proceeded to cross the river. Climbing the far bank to the ice above the falls, he studied the face of the cliff long and critically. Then he swore audibly, jabbed the butt of his rifle down into the snow and freed himself from pack and snowshoes.

The spot he had selected for his camp site was a natural veranda in the side of a huge shelf of rock that jutted far out over the crest of the deafening waterfall. In summertime such a bed-chamber must have been both unique and grand. But Jason had forgotten that it was different now. Instead of finding his old "roost" as he called it, high and dry, and away from all dangers, the sloping walls were faced solid with ice and snow. However, the exact location was clearly defined by a great crevice at the rear of the platform. This showed in a whiter line straight up through the entire brow of the promontory and down to

the bed of the river a thousand feet below the falls.

During the four months he had made his nest on the ledge, Jason never feared a visit from wolves, though he knew the country to be infested with the "slant-eyed vermin" as he dubbed them. The crevice in the rear afforded an excellent back door to the level below, and was filled nearly to the floor of the shelf with crumblings from the rift overhead. Thus it was safely navigable from the north bank for one of Jason's enormous size and strength, who could straddle with one foot on either side, the yawning chasm stretching away deep and black far beneath. But it was absolutely inaccessible to all other forms of life not possessing wings.

In repose, Jason Sands was a deep and thorough thinker; but in action he was like a coil of steel springs released. Possessing a finely disciplined mentality, thought and action were a unit with him, and operated with the rapidity and precision of lightning. In fact, as he often said, the fighting life cut out for him had been so fierce and rapid, he believed he sometimes acted first and without thought, reserving the latter operation for more leisurable and congenial circumstances.

There is a peculiar development in the faculties of men born with the instinct and love of hunting, that enables the best of

them to drop a buck running at full speed, rifle at waistline. It is a sort of scientific physical heritage that with long practice becomes truly marvelous. Jason was perfection in this backwoods accomplishment, and his remarkable skill in woodcraft had, on more than one occasion, been the means of prolonging not only his own life, but the lives of others. He was both man and master. And here he was at the top of the world, alone in a desert of ice and snow and it was coming night.

As the prospect of being eaten by wolves—either human or animal—had never appealed very strongly to his sacrificial propensities, and noting that the cliff was an ice-wall, he quickly made a decision: He would scale the wall to the shelf, scoop out the snow with axe and snowshoe, spread his blanket and have a good night's sleep while the torrent foamed below. To chop an improvised stairway slantingly up from the frozen river to the overhang above, would mean but a blow with the axe for each stair; and once safely lodged for the night, the raging waters would drown all other noises, including the yelping of his furry friends, should they trail him to his temporal perch.

That settled it. He crept cautiously to the edge of the ice just back of the steaming current, feeling out its strength and thickness with his hunter's half-axe, dipped up and drank some more of the burning-cold

water (for his supper would have to be munched dry, and thawed as munched). Backing away from the open hole he arose to his feet, and with a look that was neither animal nor human, and in a voice neither animal nor human, fairly belched: "Great God Almighty!" One swift look was enough. There they were—WOLVES! A great V-shaped line of them the width of the river, and they were on his track. Now they were climbing the south bank below the falls—Christ! hundreds of them. Aha! It is steep. The leaders slip and fall back. See! They are quarreling! Quick! It is now or never. Jason! Jason! Jason Sands have you turned to stone? Fly—somewhere—anywhere for your life.

But Jason Sands had not turned to stone. Neither had the minutest detail of the frightful drama escaped his trained vision. In the second that had elapsed he was thinking. Thinking first in this crisis, he would act later and at the proper time—he always had.

There are times in the lives of men—some men—when hope flees and life pivots in the balance to the bending of knees and the wringing of hands. A fire; the cannon's mouth; the sinking ship; a fall from a great height; a thousand ways in which men have met death. And, when a moment ago life was full of joy and sunshine, heedless were they of both present and future; but

with the Raw Head staring them in the face from eyeless orifices, they paled before the stark spectre, crumpled up in palsied supplication, bellowing into the black beyond and paying the inevitable toll with incoherent, raving protest.

There have been times when *other* men faced the same immutable spectre; and raising an aggressive chin to the level of her lipless, worm-eaten jaw, they met her empty grin of immutability with the confident smile of manly godhood; swept her croning bones from life's pathway and walked free.

For the first time in his life, varied as it had been and full of dangers, Jason Sands felt the presence of the Bony Reaper. Not that he was afraid, for to him the word was meaningless. But he knew he was in a trap. He knew the wolves would soon be upon him and that he could not kill all of them unprotected as he was on all sides. They were coming. He knew what he would do. Rash and desperate though it was, he would face and fight them where he was; kill as many as he could with pistol and knife, then—at the last moment—his strength gone and no chance or hope, he would take one step backward into the bulging crest of the open falls and fool them at last with all their accursed cunning. They should never pick his bones. On that point he was settled.

In the Great Cosmos there is one law: the Law of Change. All things being subject

to that law, why marvel that some men deign to change their minds? Some change their minds voluntarily to keep pace with the changing conditions of economic life. Others have their minds changed for them, sometimes, alas, too late.

Men have come and gone who benefited the world by having lived in it. Others benefit it by getting out of it. Jason Sands was in tune with the universe. He long since had cast off the millstones of prejudice, ignorance and superstition, and numerous beliefs, leaving more mental elbow room in which to grapple with the simple problems of everyday life.

Jason Sands Changed His Mind.

It was a horrible scheme that had flashed through his brain with a swiftness that took his breath away. And then there flashed another thought—a vision—the memory of a lone, fatherless and motherless boy, somewhere out in the world, for whom he, Jason Sands, must live and fight and hunt, as he had lived and fought and hunted for twenty weary years. For himself he did not care; but for him, his son, his only boy, he *did care*, and he *would not die*. He would live. He would fight and win; and some day he would find his child, a victory indeed. This being final, nothing could swerve him from his heroic purpose. Surely not a handful of cowardly puppies!

And Then Jason Sands Acted!

With a bound and a blow he was halfway up the ice-wall to the coveted place of safety. Madly he wielded the little half-axe, as step by step he rose. Then, with a shock that nearly loosed his hold, hanging there in bas-relief like a graven image, the old sensation of impending peril seized him as one may be seized from behind by an unseen foe. He did not turn to look, no time for that; but with a speed and strength that unleashed every fibre of muscle in his huge body and fired his nerves like the charged wires of a battery, he swung both axe and body backward and downward with the impact and resistibility of a steel truss.

“Sure! I knew it!” he hissed, as the keen, polished blade crashed full in the face and eyes of the leader of the pack, severing the husky head at the ears and sending both head and carcass spurting a crimson torrent in all directions among the onrushing brutes below.

Confusion reigned at the sight of their fallen leader, but it was of brief duration. Up shot another fanged shadow, then another and another; only to meet the now blood-encrusted steel in mid-air and to be smashed back to earth and to the mercy of the cannibalistic host at the bottom of the wall. For each pair of leaping, snapping jaws that came he sent back a dead wolf; and for every one slain another came. Up they sprang, death and blood and wounds only lending wings to their devilish fury.

It was a gruesome spectacle. Like a fly in a spider's web hung the desperate man, sheath-knife driven deep in the snow-ice far above, the handle of which he gripped in his left hand. With muscles drawn like tuned catgut, smeared with bloody ice and swaying back and forth like a storm-door on its hinges, cutting and slashing and maiming, lip curled in the old smile that never lost a battle, eyes flashing blue death down into the constellation of green death below, hung the grand old warrior. It was a sight such as man or beast had never seen before!

Just one more step! Oh, if only he could make it! One more, only one more! Safety lay just beyond that one step. They could not reach him there. But clinging on that wall-paper of bloody ice, to take that step were a ticklish venture. He reasoned that he could not make the forward turn and upward spring with enough speed and surety of footing and at the same time, while defending his none too secure left foot with the axe. If he turned and raised his right foot for the leap, the movement would put the axe, his only available weapon of defense, out of commission. An advantage that, from experience, he knew would not be lost on his alert and deadly foe. Moreover, if obliged to continue the fight in his present predicament, it was a question of but seconds; for a new peril had beset him.

His left arm for some minutes had been slowly but surely losing its sense of feeling. The numbness had now reached the shoulder, and was creeping up the biceps inch by inch to the elbow. Jason knew that when the anesthetic stage should reach the fingers, his hold on the knife must relax, sending him gyrating down into the jaws of the murderous beasts and to certain death.

O, for one blessed moment in which to switch the axe for his "Automatic." He would put a different taste into their slimy mouths. Now the cold, prickly sensation was in his forearm. With all his terrific strength he renewed his grip on the sheath-knife. It was a critical moment. The interval between life and death spanned by a lightning flash of time, but age-long in thought. Worlds swam before his eyes. The whole life scroll unrolled. Vistas—eternity-long—swept in panoramic train past the lens of his mind with a speed to shame chain lightning. Would they never let up for just one second!

"Not yet, you fiend!" he ground out between clenched teeth, the red flaked foam of battle spurting from his bursting lips, as a monster brute slashed his moccasin, the next instant to lose the whole forepart of his head to the eyes for his pains. Following the slashed moccasin, he became conscious of a thin, needle-like pain in that foot at the base of the little toe. Accom-



"For each pair of leaping, snapping jaws that came, he sent back a dead wolf."

panying the pain was a hot, feathery feeling akin to the buzz of a bee's wing. But there was no time for this. The mighty right arm with its axen extremity had never for a moment ceased its windmill cycle of cutting and slashing of skull, and jaw, nose and neck and breast; but the time had come. It was now pitch dark.

When a mere boy, Jason had learned some great and valuable lessons from old "Pete," who lived higher up on the mountain; and now, when the end seemed near, he remembered them as they had come to him a thousand times before in the hour of trouble.

"Boy," the old hunter would say, "don't fight. It's hard on good looks. But don't be a coward. And if you *have* to fight, fight to win." Also it was old Pete who taught him that: "Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well." These were simple lessons of the simple wood folk of the mountains; but Jason had never forgotten them, and their author was his friend.

With the coming of darkness, eyes only could Jason see. Eyes! Eyes! Eyes! Green balls of fire, circling and dancing and leaping to the rythmical roar of the raging waterfall. A veritable sea of emerald coals below and in front of him; at right and at left of him. Like myriads of mammoth fire-flies. Straight at him they flew, darting up and falling back. Up and down, in

and out and all around; a leaping, billowing ocean of deadly venom and fanged lightning. Always in pairs they came, like goblin-goggled demons storming the catacombed corridors of Hell. Dancing their demoniacal dance of death to the tune of the wailing damned!

It was awful! And in that maelstrom of mad destruction, the man that was a fighter lived—lived on and fought on, and breathed, and thought and smiled—the smile that forbade and baffled death. Love had fled from him. Mercy had fled from him. Humanity had fled from him. Only Will remained to him—the will to live by killing those who sought to kill him. He was obeying the law as laid down by his environment. Once a great, noble-hearted boy-man, now he was but a killer, an automaton of incarnate slaughter, as he obeyed the command and fought life for life.

In addition to the perpetual whirling of the axe the besieged miner had kept up a constant kicking of his free foot, and thrice the moccasined heel had met ivory fang; and thrice had the moose-hide been slit as with a knife. Still the fight went on. The arm kept flying, the foot kicking and thrusting and sweeping in the unequal war of desperation with might and will, against overwhelming numbers.

With mitten now blood-encrusted and frozen fast to the axe-handle, there was no

danger of losing hold on that faithful weapon. If only he could hold on by the knife they would never get him; he had come to know that; for with all their strength of body and spring of leg they were scarcely able to leap above his ankle. He would have them all wounded in time, then he would complete the climb in safety while his enemies nursed their wounds at the foot of the bluff.

Meanwhile, the numbness in the uplifted arm grew apace, creeping up the forearm, to the wrist, thence to the hand that clutched the buckhorn overhead in the ice-wall.

The green fire-balls were growing less and less numerous. The leaping and snapping less and less often. Axe met flesh and bone only occasionally now. *He was winning the battle!* Centering all his will on his now almost senseless left hand with its death-like grip on the foot of steel, he was about to try for the one step that must mean victory when something happened—a thing that turned his blood to ice and ended the night's carnage. He knew it, it had come at last. He had felt it, for the first time, alas too late!

In striking an excessively powerful blow at a pair of eyes wider apart than the rest, he had leaned too far out, and though blow met blow, and steel met flesh, cleaving a lupine skull in mid-air, *the knife had broken at the hilt!*

CHAPTER II.

THE TALE OF AN UNTOLD LOVE.

Call my son and tell him all my story,
Wisdom only may I leave behind.
Reason's torch shall more than golden glory
Light the future where the past was blind.

Ben Page, trail-worn and weary, poked his nose through the stunted growth of scrub timber that fringed Lamb Swamp, glanced across the valley to the little hut of logs on the knoll and glided easily on over the smooth snow in the bottom, after the manner of men long used to meshed foot-gear and heavy pack.

No light gleamed welcome from the cabin window, so Jason must be asleep he decided. He would give him a real stunning surprise! The rough miner grinned boyishly as he contemplated a practical joke on his unsuspecting old companion, forgetting in his eagerness both hunger and pain of trail.

It was not yet daybreak and he did not notice the big snowshoe tracks that ran across the knoll to the southwest. Had he seen these he must have recognized them among thousands. Only one person in all the North country possessed such enormous bows, and that person was Jason Sands. Their owner had wrought those very bows,

riving them from the greenhouse of Mother Nature, and fashioning them in conformity with his great size and weight, and with his own hands. Also, he had filled them with rawhide of his own killing and curing.

Ben Page crept stealthily, like a thief, upon the silent habitation of his old friend. As he drew nearer a great longing welled up in him, a longing to clasp once more the great, warm hand that he knew to be an honest one, knowing he would be welcome with the same eagerness and friendship he had found so warm and generous before he went away. He could hear his heart thumping exultantly as he strode nervously over the creaking snow. Stepping out of his snowshoes he tiptoed to the door and listened. How should he awaken him, call like a wolf? No, he might get shot! Fire off his rifle then, beat against the door wildly and finally burst storming in upon him with great hullaboo like a drunken Indian? No! This would never do, either. Such conduct would be unbecoming and undignified; besides, he was a friend who was returning repentant to seek reinstatement in his old comrade's affections. Not only this, but he was all to blame for the fuss—he knew it; and with the thoughts of it the hot blood flushed his face with honest shame and a lump got in his throat. Oh no, it wasn't fear! but just suppose he wasn't welcome! What if he were not forgiven!

Ben had seen men apprised of their unwelcome to the hospitality of Jason Sands, and the sight was not a pleasant one. What ailed him, anyway! Was it the dampness in the morning air? It gathered on his forehead like ice-water.

Then courage returned. Or was it his manhood reasserting itself? Anyway, he was a fool! he knew Jason Sands, and without further trepidation he pushed open the door and stalked in. All was silent there—silent, and dark, and cold. A lighted match revealed it all—Jason Sands was gone!

The life of Ben Page had not been strewn with roses. Many disappointments had been his; but what shall we say of the black despair that bore in upon him in the cold silence of that forsaken solitude!

“Gone!” he cried aloud, again and again in his sorrow, while the weight of his shame engulfed him and crushed him down like an avalanche.

Puzzled and alarmed, the derelict adventurer proceeded to light the grease-lamp for a hurried investigation. With mining outfit—pick, shovel and mud-boots—in the corner, he was not in the shaft. His rifle, pack and snowshoes were missing from their customary places, obviating the likelihood of foul play or suicide. There remained but one plausible deduction—the man of many sorrows had struck for the outside.

Three months back they had quarreled over religion, and Ben had packed kit and run off in a silly funk of wounded feelings—more imagined than real. Shame conquering anger at last, he had returned, sure of being forgiven and welcomed, for the heart of Jason Sands was big, and his great love was as deep and as broad as the universe.

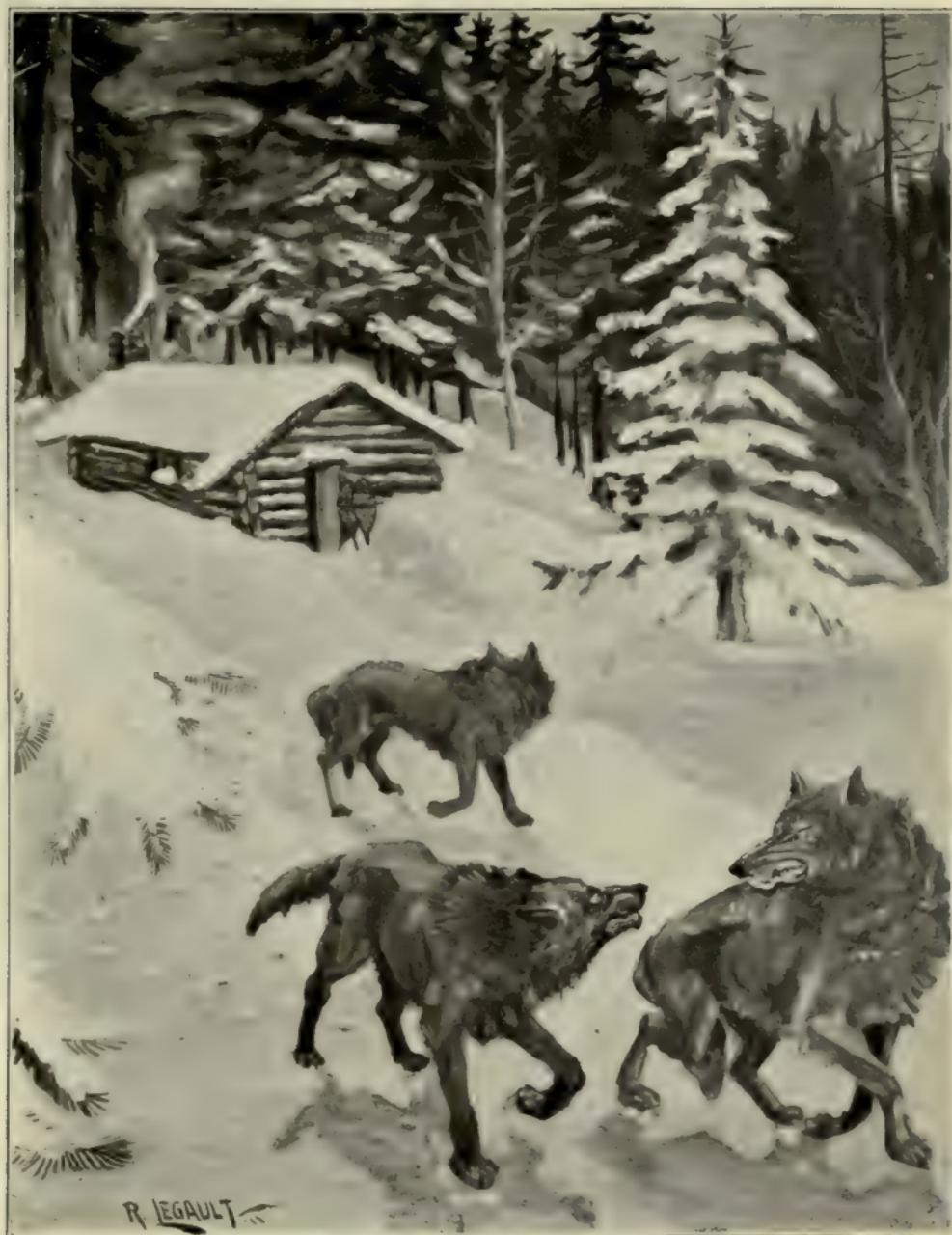
He had rescued Ben from the very jaws of death, shared cabin and chuck with him, nursed him back to life and health, later making him partner in the "Broken Bone," only to be deserted by him in the very hour when they needed each other's co-operative help in successfully working the mine. Ben had begun it, starting in mildly for him by calling Jason an anarchist and a damned infidel, and winding up with the charge that all unbelievers were just alike and that they were all going to hell along with the scientists and the Socialists! Jason had denied nothing, only smiling, noncommittally, and in an off-hand sally referred to what he termed "churchianity" as the "F. F. P." worship—"Fight-worship, Fund-worship, and Phallic-worship."

Ben loved Jason, and would gladly have died for him; but this was too much. He frankly told Jason what he thought of "Protestant devils," forgetting in his foolish passion that it was not to the Pope, but to this particular devil, that he owed his very life.

Over in a dry bed back of the "Pound" Claim, forty miles north from the "Broken Bone," Ben had been pegging away in an old hole, deserted by Lon Downing, but to little purpose. Though he had worked incessantly and painfully, keeping up a constant burning day and night, it was a discouraging venture, yielding little profit. He had been on foot since early dawn of the preceding day, without food or sleep; and upon discovering the little cabin deserted, tumbled into his old bunk of fir boughs and in the next breath was sleeping. He slept the sleep of the dead until the yellow glow of the mid-day sun streaming through the solitary window straight into his eyes, awoke him. He blinked perplexedly; looked at his watch hastily, bounded to his feet and agilely began heaping dry pitchwood against a green backlog, half burned but cold, in the stone fireplace. At the touch of a match the flames leaped up, quickly filling the little shell with warmth and a flaring red light.

Now, he knew he was hungry. Seizing the coffee pot he opened the door to fill it with snow—

"Well, by God!" exploded the startled miner, as a great gray form slunk away under a scrub fir and made for the ridge. In a flash, rifle had replaced coffee pot, and when a second later the little Savage carbine spank—spank—spanked into the frosty aphony, it spit out the lives of three great,



"And when a second later the little *Savage* carbine 'spank—spank—spanked' into the frosty aphony, it spit out the lives of three great husky timber wolves."

husky timber wolves ere they could reach cover over the scruff of the ridge thirty yards away.

Men who carry their lives in their hands, learn, with danger staring them in the face, to make every second count. To miss a shot or a blow, often is to sever the slender thread by which life dangles hazardously over the chasm of death. To live and thrive in an hostile environment one must know the art of such living, become expert in the most compatible means of self-defense, distrust all and spare none. This is life as it is, but not as it ought to be. A poet once said:

“Of all sad words of tongue or pen,
“The saddest are these—it might have been.”

To which Joaquin Miller, the poet of the Sierras, has added two more lines, which seems to bring the lament fully up to date and places a period at the right hand of all things in our social life that are cruel and wrong:

“But sadder still are these to me—
“It is, but hadn’t ought to be.”

There were no more wolves in sight, but wolf tracks and wolf signs were everywhere. There must have been hundreds of them only a few hours since, where were they now, and why had he not heard them?

“Must a picked me up down there in that black hole,” he theorized. “I sure must a bin puttin’ in the licks after hittin’ that

there bunk, or else I clean croaked and then come to with the sun or I'd a heard 'em."

Soundly indeed had the spent traveler slept, for their numbers had been many and their yelpings wild and furious. They had surrounded the cabin and kept vigil until mid-day, when suddenly they disappeared, leaving behind them three of their number — three old she wolves too heavy to run. These the hunter had shot; and dragging them to the door proceeded to dispossess them of their warm coats before the bodies should have time to freeze.

"Fine and dandy," he observed, blowing his breath against the wiry gray fur, parting it to the skin after the manner of the expert fur buyer.

"Nice and warm for my little old bunk. Too damn bad the rest of the cussed tribe had other engagements; I'd a had tails a flutterin' all over this hangout and a blanket fit to wrop a baby up in."

The science and dispatch with which the skilled woodman peeled off their pelts was a marvel. Fairly jerking them out of their hides, he flung gray skin one way and blue carcass the other. The task was a small one and quickly over. This done, he break-fasted to a quart of boiled snow and a pound of broiled moose steak, lit his bone pipe and fell back in his hollow-log chair and lost himself in a deep, silent reverie.

The scenes of the old days all came troop-

ing back over the back track in regular order. The day and night in the tree; the rescue; the warm cabin; the nursing back to life; the partnership in the mine, and then the quarrel. Jason had laughed at him, then tried to reason with him; but Ben was stubborn, and when the futility of further argument became apparent, Jason insisted on giving him all the dust—the joint product of their toiling and freezing and starving in the frozen hole on the “Broken Bone.” That was three months ago. Now here he was again, this time alone!

With Jason, his one friend and companion gone, he felt himself helplessly at the mercy of whatever cruel fate might have in store for him, with not as much as one single word in parting left to cheer him.

And then Ben remembered a woodcraft injunction that was a law with Jason Sands: “Never leave camp without some word left behind in parting.” It was a safety measure, and one never to be violated where the atmosphere of death permeated every breath one breathed, and where every life was a law unto itself.

“Maybe he did, then,” he reflected hopefully. Animated with this straw hope, he sprang to his feet and began a hurried search of the old camp. He had not far to look. Reaching under the lower (Jason’s) bunk, which was wider than the one above, he drew forth a large bundle of letters,

papers, etc., comprising a collection of many documents not unfamiliar to him, except, that, tucked under the rawhide rope on the outside, was a smaller package, across the entire length of which was written, simply: "Ben," in the unmistakable hand of Jason Sands. It proved to be a letter, and it read:

"On the Broken Bone,
"April 22nd, 1910.

"Benjamin B. Page,
"Dog Cove, Alaska."

"My dear old pard, and brother:

"I am leaving you, Ben, forever. I am leaving the Broken Bone, the gold, the wolves and the frost, and I am running away. All I have left behind belongs to you. I hate to leave you in this way, but there are things we have to do. It has been lonesome, Ben, since you went back on me, and I have thought of so many things that were but dead memories of the bitter past. I have thought, and worked, and fought, and worried through the long, cold months alone; now I am tired of it all, and I am going to say goodbye.

"I have stood it as long as I can—this frozen and whited hell—now I am going back under the sunshine where the roses bloom, and where it will be less trouble to dig a grave. I am sorry it must be so, old boy, for I once tried to help you, and you know we were a help to each other and only

quarreled once; but I know you, like all the others, have turned against me. Besides, you want to stay for the gold, so I am going to slip quietly away. Fear not for me, Ben, should you ever think of the old times and me. Take care of yourself, for life is a transient and fleeting thing. Nothing shall happen to me that need cause you pain, but I shall always think of you.

“The mine is yours; I am done with it. I found it and gave half of it to you for I liked you and wanted company. Also I found you, as you will recall; and if I helped you when you needed a hand, make me a silent promise now: Should you ever make a strike here, and I know the Bone has a pocket if only you can locate it, promise me you will try to forget your childish anger and come out into the world and help me find my boy. If it turns out that I am never heard from, Ben, will you not try to find him and tell him all my story that you are now about to learn from me? Tell him how I fought out the fight, living only for him, that I might find him and teach him of the ways wherein I have grown wise.

“Tell him of the long winter nights and of the weary, hungry days. Tell him of the fang-beasts of the forests and of the fang-beasts of civilization. Say to him, that his father did not desert him—the truth—but that it was life or death with me and that I had to go. I chose to prolong my life that

I might help in the Great Revolution—help hasten the day when all mankind shall be one mighty phalanx of peaceful workers and happy brotherhood, singing with the god of love in a reunited and fearless world. Tell him that I love him, Ben, that I would crush him to my breast, would plead with him, aye, that I would die for him; but he is gone from me now, is lost in the crowd—in the swirling, insane mob—and I may live to see him, alas, never more.

“I loved my boy, Ben, and I love him still. Now that I come to think of it over again—think back down the dead years that are gone—I can see his little happy face alight with joy and laughter, and the frousy head of red, silken curls shaking in the sunlight to the patter of his chubby feet. In fancy once again I feel the tiny, soft hands pulling at my face, or patting my shoulder at end of day; and the sparkling eyes of just this morning, now ablink with sleepy things and ready for pillow and the little evening prayer.

“I have not been happy, Ben, since the damned authorities took our home away. (Home, did I say? Yes, it was a home, the kind of home a lone, helpless boy could make for a more lone and helpless babe.) And then they took my child away also. Tore him from me with the aid of the ‘law!’ This, after I had rescued him from the ‘Goodwill Farm,’ where that she hell-bird had decreed that he must go.

“Then I cursed the law, Ben. The law that stabbed me in the back; the law that smote me with a mailed fist; the law that murdered my every hope with the murder of my baby’s mother—the law that robbed me of my birthright and my love—that blotted out my home.

“Since then we have drifted apart. I could not find my boy, though I have searched the world over. It is the one battle in which I have failed.

“I could not get to tell you of these things before, for I did not wish to cause you pain; but the bereavement has become more than I can bear, and I feel a sense of helplessness after all my long, vain search, and I want my boy to know.

“Call my son, Ben, and tell him all my story. Somewhere among the crashing ruins of Capitalism’s ever falling wrecks you may find him, and perchance, the little pat-a-cake hands of yesterday are now feeding some grim iron monster in the mills or on the steel rails of wage-slavery. No longer is he the dimpled babe of tender years, but the handsome youth unfolding into ripe young manhood. Somewhere submerged in the depths of their social jungle they have him, and I fear for him, Ben. There were none to fear for me.

“There were none to guide my footsteps in the ways of wisdom, and so I made the blunders. When I should have been learn-

ing the science of life I was being driven among the gears. When I fainted at my ill-appointed task they scourged me with the lash of hunger, and when I paused to dream of my lost childhood they called me lazy and a shirk. So I sweat my blood for my masters, while their pampered sons and daughters basked in the sweet southern sunshine; on the palm beaches at the seashore, or in the mountains among the fragrant breezes and the green, shady forests.

“Call my son, Ben, for wisdom only may we leave behind. Call him and teach him love and life, and the new liberty that is to be. Teach him the secret of health, and woodcraft, and how to till the soil. Help him in the building of strength and beauty; for the morning of his day is come and there is work to do that we must leave unfinished. You told me once that you could never repay me the debt you owed me for saving your life. You can pay it a million times, Ben, if only you will hear my voice. It is not me to whom you owe the debt, but to yourself. When you have been true to yourself you will have done your duty to your fellowmen. There is no such thing as debt and credit. There is but robbery and injustice.

“I would teach and guide my son, and help him over the unsmooth trails, for many dangers lurk hidden along the whitened ways. It is not to dodge the pitfalls into

which I fell that I would teach him, nor would I have you perfume the bottomless pits of poverty, whence arise the unsweet smells that profane the very breath of life; but I would have him learn to damn and forsake the outlived codes and creeds of a dead, and archaic past; fill up and destroy the polluting cesspools of their social hells, making a fairer and a safer way.

“I have gone the route alone. I have done the best I knew. There is much I have done, and much I might have done; the day is waning now with my work still just begun. The structure is incomplete and the frost of life’s winter is in my hair. At the prime of life I am an old man! It is not that I am old, Ben, but that the task is old. My years are few enough, but those years have all been overtime years. The years they crowded into me and the life they crowded out of me. They speeded up the machine, and up, in turn, the machine speeded me. The ‘truth’ they taught to me I later learned to be a lie. The while they sang to me of ‘freedom,’ they shackled me a slave. The ‘liberty’ they bragged about I found was only on paper, and burns yellow with sulphurous smells on the Fourth of July; and the only liberty I can boast is liberty to starve.

“Call my son, Ben, for Reason’s torch shall more than golden glory light the future where the past was blind.

“Knowledge is good to have, Ben, but Truth is crowning glory. Knowledge is not always truth, but truth is always knowledge. The error of the race lies not in that men know too little, but that *they know too much that is not true*. The greatest truths are yet untold, and the greatest force in life is the all-conquering power of love. The most blessed thing in life is love, for love is peace and acquiescence. The greatest crime is the crime of teaching a lie. Poverty is a crime, and *profit* is the cause of crime. Ignorance is the cause of poverty; slavery is the cause of ignorance; false teaching is worse than ignorance, and falsehood is taught for *profit*!

“ 'Tis sad to learn at twilight that all day long we toiled to build upon the sand; and sadder still at twilight of life to learn that all of life had been no more than but a baneful lie.

“All they made me learn at such frightful cost I have had to unlearn again. The years I spent in training mind were years of waste to me, for they were cultivating brains to sell like cabbages are raised for market. Three times a year, Ben, with my labor I built a home, living the while in a dirty, rented shack. But the homes I built were for the masters and they were built, like my education, to sell. The ‘Labor Market,’ this sort of thing is called—the process of buying and selling brains! The

traffic still flourishes, for youth is full of optimism and hope; and the same old lie they crammed me with they're teaching still.

“‘Hands on vests,’ the sign boards in their windows read, and in their newspapers their ads were many. ‘Hands on vests,’ ‘hands on shirts,’ and ‘mill hands,’ were common calls for help, but never did they advertise for brains. They were wise—the bread-masters—they knew the brains would have to come along too, a sort of ‘boot’ thrown in for good measure along with the ‘hands’ that must be worn out for profit. The brains were a part of the deal, and *all the deals were made, arbitrarily, by the masters!*

“Hands on vests, indeed! And hands on plows, too. Hands on shoes; hands on coats, bread, homes and all. Fashioning the world’s wealth into perfect things of use, while the hands of the masters of wage-slavery were ever busy, not on ‘vests,’ but at the throats and in the pockets of their worshiping, submissive hirelings.

“Think of it, Ben! Upon this auction block of human souls I stood, blind and dumb, like horned cattle are marketed, and watched them traffic in my wealth of manhood—my hands, my brains, my labor—verily, my life was but a commodity, and for all this they loaned me back my board and clothes. I say *loaned*, because my

wages were only so much loaned money which had to paid right back again into the same channels from which it came to me, for the necessities of life, and with another profit added to the profit on the wages, which wages were so many drops of my own heart's blood.

"Oh, I was a good animal until I awoke, and I peddled out my muscle and my sweat for a pauper's chance to live. They prated to me of 'honest labor,' and I prided myself in that I could do more work in a day than any two men I had ever known, and do it better. This was because I was ignorant, Ben, but they called it 'thrift and frugality!' It is a siren song they sing to their satisfied slaves, which they call 'the dignity of honest toil!' They accompanied this alluring refrain with the rhapsodic syncopation of 'Industry's Merry Hum,' burnt much red fire and waved numerous sizes of mottled rags made in sweatshops to befuddle and awe the mild-eyed herd upon whose backs they rode.

"Oh, the pity of it all! Oh, the waste of it all! Oh! the crime—the unspeakable, unpardonable, damnable crime—of this thrice damned mockery: their 'Christian Civilization!'

"And then there was Erma! Erma, the beautiful, the pure and the true. Erma, with her warm, red lips and her fairy tresses. Erma, the light of a new world to

me, the living water of youth, and love, and feminine sweetness. Erma, the queen of my dreamland wherein bloomed roses everlasting. And mingled with the meadow smells, her perfumed breath upon my cheek, where, in subdued chorus, cricket-song and frog-pond melodies sped the fading day at twilight's peaceful hour, we pledged a tryst of love that Erma, my dearest Erma carried to a virgin's grave.

"It was the rath outbursting of a purer love than which this world has never known, away back there among the dear hills of old New Hampshire, Ben, in the long ago.

"Erma was a farmer's daughter and we lived near together. In school she used to hold her slate so I could see and helped me with my lessons. We pranked as only lovers will, in all the honeyed lore of youthful lovecraft, rich and rare from Love's unpublished story. For every teacher's rigid rule she knew a cunning ruse; and I've seen her miss in spelling just to keep me at the head. Also she knew all the secret things that Mother Nature hides from city folk, and all the shady glades wherein the wild flowers grew were known to her.

"She could find the coolest springs; and often when we used to romp the woods together, she'd take some hidden trail among the aromatic verdure, where, with breezes purled with bird-song overhead and fox-

glove blooming underfoot, we'd wile away to one more mossy glen, there to tell the things that only lovers know.

“And then came the crash! A bolt of lightning from the clear sunshine! The sun went out! The moon went out! The stars hid their faces in shame! Of course it was ignorance, that, together with false-teaching, backed by self-interest, it is ever so. The secret was out at last! We were ‘caught,’ that’s what they called it, and so, an illiterate, wrathful mother proceeded to vent her savage fury on her youthful offspring. Suspicion had long been growing, and now she would have to own up! We had thought to be forgiven when the time came, but we were lame in our reckoning. We were unschooled in the mercenary artifices of match-making mothers. ‘Whom God hath joined together’ suddenly became an alien injunction. That ‘marriages are made in Heaven’ was weak defense against the more practical theory of dollars and cents. So they proceeded to tear us asunder and our hearts asunder. They descended upon us and snatched her from me as a she wolf tears a mother ptarmigan from the nest of her coming brood.

“Erma had called to me through the parlor window and I knew the hour was come. There was the ring of confidence in her sweet voice, mingled with just the faintest note of challenge for their benefit, and

all pitched in a sad, unnatural key, hysterically clarioned with passionate appeal, and modest but thrilling with righteous victory —a victory she believed with all her heart was now at hand. Oh, she was the very soul of optimism, was this sunny-haired spirit of the hills. Alas for the optimism of innocence!

“The magnitude of the situation and the task devolving upon me for the moment unnerved me. At sound of her voice my heart stopped, sank, and then fluttered up into my throat, sending the boiling blood to the very sight of my eyes in a blinding shower of white-hot meteors. But it was only for a second, and when I rallied and strode into the room I was as calm as a tree.

“In the middle of the room stood old Bart Tannerhill, ox-goad in hand, the irate she dragon, fists on hips beside him; while cowering in a corner, her big, soft eyes aswim with tears, crouched Erma, my child-wife. At sight of me she bounded to her feet like a wounded fawn, swept through them like a sunbeam and into my arms. God! How I loved her, my darling, in that prophetic moment! I can hear her heart now, Ben, as it beat wildly in her terror against my breast. I can see again the upturned face and trembling lips, as they flew to meet mine in the trustful embrace she gave me.

“‘Tell them, dear,’ she said amid her

sobbing, 'tell them all; I have, and they won't believe me.'

"And I did tell them. And when I had finished they believed *me*, for, although I dreaded the ordeal, once begun it was the happiest moment of my life. In that moment I was a king!—a Hercules—a god! I knew we were right, and in that right I was invincible. I could have won a world. God, aye, a million Gods could not have phased me. There she was, my natural mate, clinging to me for protection. Upon me she had cast her very life. Her every ounce of unrestrained womanhood, pulsating the purity of the great love and trust of her, and it was all for me. I lived for her and she for me. I was ready to fight for her, I gladly would have died for her, or I would have gone to hell for her! Who would not?

"Here was life. Here was womanhood. Here was happiness and love and companionship with youth and beauty, one woman who was real, and whole, and true.

"It was at this point that the hand of a jealous rival dealt his cowardly blow. I was standing with my back to the door, oblivious to the danger that lurked behind, until Erma screamed and made as if to spring. I shall never forget the look her features wore. She had seen, but not in time. Some would have fainted; but not she. My arms were about her when she

gave the alarm, but she freed herself with the agility and strength of an acrobat. Giving me an heroic jerk forward to save me, she tried to spring at the fiend. I turned just as a flash of lightning and deafening roar of thunder crashed down upon me, into me and through me. It was all done in a second's time, but in that brief space the heavens and earth burst and fell together; I was crushed under the debris like an egg-shell, and then I knew no more.

“When again I knew, I was gliding smoothly through space. All the stars were in motion, diving, shooting, rising and moving all about me. Next I was aware of a cool, soft touch like snowflakes in summer falling gently on my forehead. Then, faintly at first, came low, tremulous sounds creeping into my ears, sounds that were mellow and endearing. Never was music wrought of mortal hand to match such as this. How long I was listening to the far-away murmurings I never knew. Presently I dared to open my eyes, just the merest peep; it was all I could do. The lids would not obey my will to open them more. I floated through the silvery starlight gradually becoming conscious of a sweet, radiant vision. It was neither the stars, the moon, nor the sunshine. It was grander than all these rolled together. It was a heavenly vision. I thought I was in heaven, and that angels were ministering to some silly whim of my

ephemeral desires. I could see more plainly as my eyes grew accustomed to the light, and I saw that the vision was feminine and very near me. Tenderly the beautiful white face bent down and laid fuzzy, moist lips upon my mouth. I tried to raise my arms to draw her to me, but they were arms, not of flesh and muscle, but of stone! Also, I tried to give back the kisses in generous measure; but again the command of my will was disobeyed. My tongue was on fire, but my lips were frozen! Then my eyelids became mysteriously leaden and scraped cruelly down over the eyeballs shutting out the stellar glory and her unearthly beauty. All was black night again. The sweet sounds died away; the soft caresses ceased, and I toppled over a deep, dark void and fell down, down, down, into the unstarred night of eternity.

“But the sweet vision in some way found me out, and came the radiant face through the black night, dispelling the last shadow with her coming, like the dissolving views of the stereopticon. The cool hand was laid again on my forehead, and my icen lips were being melted with her hot, moist kisses. The warm sunshine came and fell in golden flood upon her billowy hair. I still thought I was in heaven, and that this fair creature was the goddess Aurora come to bring the morning of the Great Day.

“Then came the soft murmurings again. The sounds growing louder and more distinct with the clearer sense of returning consciousness.

“‘Jason! O Jason, dear,’ someone was calling, someone far yonder on the hillside, so faintly and distant seemed the voice. I was scarcely sure I heard at first, but as the calling continued and my ears took on the repeated resonance, I began to understand. I made a mighty effort to throw off the leaden weights from my eyes, and the dizzy stupor from my feverish brain, and did succeed partly, when with my returning sight came the most excruciating pain. But in the next instant the pain was forgotten. The mist had cleared. It was Erma! She was bending over me, crying over me, praying for me and calling to me to come back to life and to her again.

“It was her blessed hand that had bathed my forehead. How may I describe the scene of joy that followed my awakening! It were profanity to attempt it. Such gladness never shone through the soul of woman. It was a joy not of earth. I tried to smile and tell her with my eyes that I knew and would live. She understood, and with fingers tearing at her breast, her eyes streaming with tears, she burst into a paroxysm of hysterical laughing, crying and screeching, that was the very effervescence

of the insanity of human delight. The dear child was mad and overwhelmed with joy.

“I had been shot! shot in the back by a cowardly, moral pervert, and without warning. The lead had torn clean through me, splashing my blood in Erma’s face and hair. She had thought me killed, but she would never give up in her effort to make me live. It was in the evening just at sunset, and when I regained consciousness, it was at sunrise the following morning. Oh, the dear child, Ben! She never left my side during all that lapse of time, but had worn herself out working and worrying over me to save my life. When at last the victory was won and I opened my eves and looked at her and smiled, she saw that I knew. It was too much for her overwrought condition. She became hysterical and fell in a swoon by the bedside.

“In the excitement of the quarrel with the Tannerhills over our secret, we had not noticed a carriage drive up, and when the shambling slouch of Pert Perry’s ape-like hulk sloughed into the hallway to listen to it all, he had completed the slinking venture without noise and unobserved. Erma, having asked me to tell them all, I had just wound up by saying, defiantly, that we were now man and wife, and that I would protect her with my life and that nothing should come between us, not even the Perry parasites. It was at this point that the

rejected suitor leaped into the room and shoving a 44-Colt between my shoulders fired. Erma had tried to give warning, but it came too late.

“The would-be assassin was never apprehended, but he subsequently met the same fate he tried to settle on me at the hands of a woman he had previously wronged—a poor mill girl who had loved him and surrendered her confidence to him, only to be forsaken and cast aside. From this she had gone down the line; and in making his escape from the attack on my life, he had fallen into her hands in a house of ill-fame, where the race teaching of revenge got in its deadly work.

“Erma nursed me back to life and in two weeks I was out again; but the Tannerhills were obdurate and set. There was no reasoning with them. Erma was not of age, and that settled it. It was her turn now, for her heart was broken. They kept her under lock and key as criminals are kept in prison. They made the minister confess, then got him kicked out of church for helping us conceal our secret marriage. You see, Ben, it was a devilish violation of the creeds, the codes and the conventions. It was the rankest heresy of the accepted law of private ownership of parent in child until the child is old enough to be grandparent. Health, strength and youth stood for nothing. Beauty stood for nothing.

Love stood for nothing. Even life itself stood for nothing. Only the codes, the creeds and the conventions stood for something—these and the dividends that were to accrue from the sale of their beautiful daughter into white slavery, for this only is what marriage can mean where love does not exist, but where the motive for such prostitution is gold.

“Ah! we had not consulted the authority. We had not drawn a check to the law. We had not harkened to the merry jingle of clinking coin. But we had looked into each other’s eyes and therein read the old, old story. We had ripened in the summer of each other’s sunshine. We knew we loved and wanted each other. In our natural desire we saw only success and we never considered the possibility of failure. We had heard Love calling to us through the dawn of youthful glory and we had gone straight to the goal. Into our plan of life we had not invited death. In our house of love we made no room for hate. Heaven was of our own making, and when we had built it we had nothing left with which to build a hell. Or else we had forgotten to build a hell. Perhaps we were too ignorant, too happy, or too young for that. Possibly we were not sufficiently well civilized as yet. Anyway, as I said before, we had heard the voice of Love calling out to us from the wilderness of soul-starvation, and we had

gone to meet it, and we did meet it. We met it in the same good old way that true lovers have ever, and will ever continue to meet it. Yes, we met and knew it, basked our souls in it—even worshiped it, in spite of code, creed and convention. In spite of their fearsome wailings and their tyrannical dictums. In spite of their clanking marionettes, their stereotyped heavens, their horned devils and their orthodox hells.

“Yes, Ben, they murdered Erma, my Erma. The loss of her, coupled with the shame of their social crime, drove me stark mad. For years I drifted in a daze of mental bewilderment. My ‘friends’ sneered at me, ridiculed me and tried in all manner of ways to discredit and disgrace me. Whenever they dared, they took advantage of me to further their own sordid ends; and when I thrashed them for their double dealing they ran away into safety to stab me in the back with their javelins of slander.

“It was then that the panderers and the demagoggs would appear. With each successive turn of the wheel of fortune they came or went as the case might be, hanging onto my broad shoulders whenever I was prosperous, and deserting me to a man in my hour of adversity. They all turned against me, Ben, even my brothers turned against me and shamefully maligned and scandalized me, calling me black sheep and trying to magnify their own puny lives by heaping odium upon mine.

“So I learned that, in a society enslaved under a system of economic strife and self-interest, there can be little friendship worthy of the confidence of honest men and women. After that, I slipped down into the seething, festering abyss of this grafting commercialism in a desperate effort to drown the memory of an assassinated love among the shifting sands of hived humanity—inhumanity—gone mad for gain.

“Nature had been kind to me, Ben, as well you know. Over well built and thewed like the things that roam the wild, I knew not fear, and the poisoned fang held its terrors, but not for me. I could take the world by the horns, as it were, and wrestle it to the bent of my will. Also, I could hold my own in a fight; but I was poor, and all my people were poor; so this, Ben, was the secret of the crash. Had I been rich like the Perrys, all would have been well with the Tannerhills. Born up among the stars on the snow-capped crest of the White Mountains, we knew not the crooked ways of the taloned financier, and so we were of plebian cast! We were not of the blue blood tribe like the saffron-faced and saffron-livered Perrys. We were just common dirt like the Tannerhills. Producers—tillers of the soil—were we. The language of the Stock Exchange were Sanscrit to us: but we knew how to do the useful things of life, and life’s labor, as we knew it, was a joy, and we were happy.

“But plain mountain dirt was not good enough for their only daughter. For such as she there must be found finer clay! Down in the town men wore neat-looking white cuffs and black, shiny foot gear. Also they curled their mustaches and talked fast and loud. The pretty girls of the village wore much fine raiment and worked seldom. This was the place for Erma! Here she must become refined and stately and dignified.

“‘She’d shine in a ballroom and them fine gentlemen would look at her, I bet,’ her mother used to say.

“‘Cut out to be a lady sich as don’t have to work,’ old Aunt Ellenor encouraged. But Erma, mind you, had never been consulted in the matter and possessed ideas of her own that she thought best to confide only to one she knew she could trust.

“The banker—old man Perry—was rich, and this banker had a son. It was for him that they murdered Erma, my Erma. Although an imbecile, deformed and bald, they had favored him, implanting hatred in her young heart with such favor. But he could sport many a white diamond and held office in the Republican party. Also he could get drunk, beastly drunk; and this was the fine gentleman over in the village that tried to court my Erma, and whom her mother had picked for her to wed. For this cancerous, parasitic offal, they proceeded to tear us asunder and from each other’s love, breaking our hearts—Erma’s

and mine—and when it must have been all in vain, and forever too late.

“She never saw her child, Ben, this little love mother—this virgin—purest of the pure. She never saw the flowers again! But when the silver clarion rings down the pathway of the future in Freedom’s joyous reveille, there in the pantheons of Love and Truth, and Virtue, shall men bare their heads in reverence and sing of such as she, whose chastity was not for price; whose soul was the fountain of love—Humanity’s God—and whose bosom rose and fell with the surge of maternal grandeur.

“When the news was brought to me I hurried to her—fought my way to her. They barred the door on me and I went through it like a tornado. I was no fledgling at twenty, Ben, and wise men hesitated to oppose me. But they would not let me see our child. They spirited it away. Of course I could not stay. But the speck of life would live, and the fire of life, virile with the surge of health and purity—the heritage of a reciprocal and youthful love—would not go out. They tried to kill it, and still it lived and thrived. They starved it, but it stayed with them and in spite of them. Then its tormentors hit upon a happy medium; they would freeze it to death! Ah! the very thing! Why had they not thought of so simple a thing before? So they left it on a doorstep a far drive from home and

in the night; but it's blood was red. It was of that breed. Moreover, and to help thwart their devilish purpose it would seem, a winter thaw set in that very night; and when the next morning the good farmer's wife opened the door to sweep back the snow, it put up its tiny red hands to 'go to mamma,' and smiled up at her like a beauty rose dropped in the snow.

"They were rid of it at last, the brat (so they thought), but the neighbors knew! They had heard, for it was in the country.

"Back it went again. Then the Smiths got it and the town paid its board. 'Town pauper,' it went down on the books. Later old 'Spot' condemned it to go to the County Farm. But in this last wanton crime I baffled them. Leland had written at the last minute and I rose like a revolution. I swept them back and fled with my boy on the very day they had him all bundled up to go. It was like the pardon that comes in the nick of time in the stories and moving pictures. It was chance, mere accident, but in that accidental coincidence of time, thought and action, the whole future course of a human life was changed, environed and reconstructed.

"But, Ben, I am wearying you. This letter is longer than I had planned, and yet it is all too short. Briefly, I have told you the story I denied you when we quarreled, when you, with your childish superior as-

sumption boasted of your devil charms and your ancestral lineage, and called me names because I shrank from telling the sad secrets of my gloomy past. It is the story of only one more of the heart-breaking, home-wrecking crimes of riot-ruling Capitalism. Capitalism, the social criminal of which men sing; for which men pray; and for which men vote. It is but one more of the millions of cold-blooded outrages of a misguided civilization for which men shed their blood; for which they fetter their wives and children in slavery; from which a nation gasps in poverty, leaving a pauper heritage to the generations yet unborn—generations destined to be poorer than each predecessor—with a heritage stained with the shame of every unspeakable crime in the criminal category since the race began. It is the story of how they broke two loving hearts. It is the story of two broken homes. It is the true story of how they murdered as pure and as holy a virgin as ever mothered a Jesus. And it is the tale of the scattered fragments of their pious ravage cast upon the four winds of a groaning world.

“I have wandered over the earth in a trance. I have made friends easily, for they could read the open book; but I have lost them more easily, for they could not understand.

“My life and home ruined, with the essence and goal of life destroyed, I fought

the unequal fight. The odds were against me. The dice were loaded, and with the chasm of desolation ever yawning before me, I have been but chaff in the tempest. To-night, dear old pal, I am lonely, lonely, and sad and blue. I am thinking of my sweetheart—my one love—who sleeps over the river and over the mountains. Far away there in the old churchyard they laid her. Under the weeping willows and among the white stones she's resting with the kiss of blessed peace upon her brow, and with the kiss I pressed to her cold, white lips—life's last love token.

“I see again the smile she gave me at the parting. It was her last. She wears it still. It was her answer to my promise, Ben, the promise I have kept for twenty years, and which shall not now be broken. Bless her trusting soul! She had faith that we shall meet again among the flowers and the wildwood in a new home among the stars. Who shall blame her for this faith? It was her early teaching, even as it was mine. I will keep that promise, Ben, and if, when I go, I shall find the dear one knew, then I can meet her as when we parted; and she shall know me then as she knew me in the old days when we were young.

“I will not desecrate her dear memory with a violation of her confidence. It was not her wish, but mine that I make the sacrifice. When first her burning cheek fell limp against my own, her round, white

arms trembling on my neck, I kissed her in her shining hair and spoke the words that shall stand unmoved against the wrath of man, and God, and Heaven and Hell. Here are the words, Ben; say them over and over again, and if you live to grant my wish and find my boy, call him to your side and teach him the sacred words with all their grand meaning: '*I will be true, I will be true!*'

"And now I long for the sound of the night winds through the treetops, and the smell of the sweet grasses where we roamed and sang together. There lies buried my world with my Erma. White lies her lily bosom, whiter than the white snows above it. There she waits for me, and I am going home.

"Forgive me for running away from you, Comrade, and now good-bye."

"JASON SANDS."

"P. S.—Please try to get this package out on the down mail at your first opportunity. I have addressed it to her brother, who is my friend, Mr. Leland B. Tannerhill, the only survivor of the family. You will find the dust to pay carry and postage in a cartridge box at the foot of my bunk. I have used your name as a return address in case of non-delivery, and should it come back to you, you preserve it and turn it over to my boy should he ever turn up. His name is Quimby Sands."

"JASON."

ERMA,
THE BELLE OF THE WILD WOOD.

(A Retrospection)

Belle of the Wildwood, my angel-haired Erma,
Nymph of the Fountain of Beauty to me ;
Mocking birds sigh for her sorrows and murmur :
“Erma, sweet Erma, the belle of the lea.”

Eyes like the stars in their blue-mantled glory,
Cheeks like the roses abloom in the snow ;
Telling again of the old pretty story,
Darling you loved me, you loved me I know.

Pictures appear on the screen oft returning,
Visions of paradise when you were near ;
Ever my life with the love-fires aburning,
Erma, will cherish your memory dear.

Sadly the moon and the stars purple gleaming,
Lonely my exile wherever I roam ;
Oft as of old I return in my dreaming—
Tearfully calling she beckons me home.

Nightly I weep by the camp-fire aglowing,
Whippoorwill calls to his mate in the dell ;
Driven forever to wander just knowing,
Erma, I love you, my fairy-haired belle.

CHAPTER III.

THE EVER PRESENT MENACE.

I have drunk of the strife
In the battle of life
From the chalice at Poverty's well;
In the blistering flare
Of the hell of despair
I have seen that my tongue may not tell!

With the breaking of the knife, Jason Sands did not fall down to be eaten by the wolf-pack.

With the feeling in his left hand and arm entirely gone, the time had come when he must either try for the final climb, or else give up and be torn to pieces alive. To give up a fight once begun were the ethics of weakness and spelt defeat and death. He was not one of the giving-up kind.

Knowing that he was within reach of the shelf, and that only a thin crust of ice lay between him and safety, he had planned with the dealing of that last terrific blow to spring for the final landing, and at the same time bring the axe up over and forward in contact with the crust with enough force to break it through. It was the act of this combination of spring and double blow, that had thrown the extra tension on the thin steel. It snapped like glass; but the trained will of a master mind defied the

shock, and as the ponderous hulk swayed clear of the ice-wall, it shot forward and upward, the free, right foot lodging squarely in the step made for it by the axe, as both axe and arm to the elbow crashed through the crust of the crevice, giving him a full arm hold on the solid rock.

Thus the battle ended and he was safe—for the night, at least.

Jason paused in his new position and rested long enough to smile down at the defeated brutes with their fiery eyes in the darkness there, then cleared the snow from his bracket perch and took account of the situation. There was his pack securely strapped in its customary place on his back. How it ever got there was beyond him. He distinctly remembered having removed and left it with his carbine and snowshoes when before that last drink from the falls, and the memory of it ended there. But here it was, and in it there was moose meat cut thin, and he was hungry. Also it contained the five boxes of cartridges and his Indian blanket. But his *Savage* was down there on the ice, and the only ammunition available was about fifty shots for the *Automatic*. "That'll help some," he said, slipping off the bloody mitten and feeling of the holster at his hip. He was silent a moment, then fishing a quantity of the moose meat from the pack, continued: "I hate to disappoint you, you patient, saintly

dears, for I know you must be hungry after such violent exercise; but I'm not quite ready yet, and if you'll stick around here till morning, we'll open the show with a farce comedy, and I'll sing you a sweet lullaby all in one key, and one you forgot to get down on the program."

The pain in his foot worried him not a little; but he was hungry and spent, and sick. The blood creeping back into the paralyzed arm felt like ice water. He did not look a last time to see if the green fire balls were gleaming up at him; he knew they were, without looking. He would not hector them. Wait till morning! He would show them!

The shelf cleared of snow, and his unthinkable repast greedily devoured, though it was frozen with the hardness of stone, and with the Boreal batteries blazing their Northern Lights above and the gray angels of death keeping vigil below, he rolled himself in his warm blanket and slept.

The nights are long up under the North Star, and Jason's sleep was not a peaceful one. What with the events of the day how could one be expected to sleep soundly! With the repose of the conscious mind, came the reign of the sub-conscious, or dream mind. Strangely enough, he did not dream of wolves—not the fanged kind, the kind that were waiting to eat him at the foot of the cliff—but he dreamed back down the

trail of the past, with all the long train of disasters through the whole horrible labyrinth of his chance existence of crushing, debasing toil.

Dreams with Jason Sands were no new menace to trouble his peaceful slumbers. When had he ever been free from them! He had worked and worried and thought, and fought, and failed! His brain had become a veritable perpetual motion. It would not stop thinking, and he could not stop it. Asleep or awake it rambled on just the same in spite of him. The machinery of his brain seemed like the machinery of the hosiery mills, and the weave rooms, and the shoe factories in which he had worked. There, when his day's work was done, a night shift would come on to operate the machines in the factory, as the night shift of demons came now to operate the machinery of his brain. But the factories and the machines were owned by others—parasites who did no useful work; while his brain belonged to him, or ought to belong to him, and why could not the torment cease now that he had rebelled and become an exile! Crudely, and in a vague way, he knew the chemistry of the brain, and he knew that all this everlasting nightmare of somni-slavery was a result of long years of servitude in wage-slavery under the lash of hunger. Each separate brain cell had received and retained these weary impres-

sions as the dry plates of photography receive and retain impressions through the lens of the camera. That's what the brain was for—to receive impressions then to develop and direct the mind and body accordingly.

He would close his eyes, and instantly the power would come on, and away would fly the pulleys, the gears and the belts. Another operator would step in and work his tired brain through another long shift, and things had gotten so he was powerless to prevent it. Thoughts would flit rapidly one after another, and with each shifting scene, he could feel a twitching of the eyeballs. This twitching of the eyeballs was more than an annoyance, it was painful, and brought on dull, sick headaches. He would try to control his eyes, commanding them to be still, and centering all his mental forces on the effort; but success would be only temporary, and presently the demons of unrest would be turning at the cranks again, and the twitching and jerking and flitting would begin again, and the snapping, crashing, buzzing sounds would get back in his ears, to damn his every moment with their diabolical activity.

Dreams! Dreams! Dreams! Oh! the dreams and the pictures, and the visions and the horrors, the noises, and the tears, and the pain! And oh! the poverty, and the pictures of the poverty! An endless

chain and endless moving picture film of vivid flashes from scenes of life and death that threatened to unbalance his mind and drive him mad.

From a day's toil in the frozen earth he would sink into his bunk of fir boughs, eyes heavy and weary for sleep, but no sleep would come to him. No sooner would he stretch himself for the sleep his eyes craved, than open they would pop, and open they would stay, far into the night; while his aching muscles and tired bones turned and twisted and flopped and thrashed around, as the whistles blew and the bells clanged, and the street cars screeched and ground around corners in the helter-skelter chaos of muddled civilization. The more the ache and pain, the more, it seemed, his sleepy eyes rejected the very sleep he could not live without. And then he would spring up, light the grease lamp and shiver through a pile of old manuscripts he had written, rewritten, and which he ever found himself rereading, rewriting, correcting and revising, and tying up again. Some were songs, songs of labor, and of labor's woes. Some were baby lullabys, and some were love songs, tender and full of sweet appeal. Other poems there were among them, and stories, philosophy, science and letters of address. This nightly task performed, he would return to the bunk half frozen and fall into a sleep that was not a sleep at all—

asleep in body, but with mind alert and active—to wake at dawn with lagging spirits, sodden, discouraged, and blue!

But these were moods. They came only periodically, and it was while obsessed by one of these unhappy broodings with its reminiscences of sorrow, that the lure of the old home had come upon him with a force he could not resist. He knew it was a weakness, but suffered himself to be whelmed by it, and finally yielding to its subtle wooings as a blind man yields to the touch of a little child's hand.

On the trip to Dawson, he had planned to camp only every other night, with hope that the excessive strain of trail and pack might break down the momentum of his brain and induce sleep. He hoped to escape the dreams, for he needed all his strength for the long tramp over the snow. Alas, he was doomed to failure in this fond hope like all others; for no sooner were the scenes of the day just ended shut out, than came galloping on the heels of the wolf fight, the whole miserable phantasmagoria of infernal horrors, associated here and there with a glint of joy and beauty, the more to aggravate the pestilence of the black drama.

Strangely enough, the joy pictures were the first on the program. A boy again, he was playing yacht race on the white sandy shores of Squam Lake, sending out his toy

canoes with their birch-bark sails, under the frowning visage of old Bald Ledge. There were the two "Rattlesnakes," towering, like the nude nipples of some adamantine goddess, basking in the summer sunshine, or lying dormant in her crystal robes of brumal splendor. He was a strapping youth, and it was autumn. The corn was yellow, and the vast maple forests were dreamily nodding their tinted tresses to the drowsy year. The eagle soared higher in his dizzy round above the mountain, and there was cider-making at the old Smith mill.

On Ace Enos' Point he was hunting squirrels with old Bob, or lining bees with Arthur Godfrey, and rolling rocks from the top of West Hill through Steve Bennett's sap house, for the mischief that was in him, and that had to come out of him.

And still on went the dream. The roar of the little river did not disturb him, and the pain in his swollen foot was forgotten along with the wolf fight and the frost. He was transported far from the jagged cliff where his tired body rested, and in fancy once again he was at the Red Gate, splashing home through the rain with his brothers from The Bridge. A vision of the Otter Islands came next. There were his brothers, wrecked, and he was flying to the rescue! The lake was afoam and the sky black and lowering. With blanket and pad-

dle he was running for his canoe, Omar and Sam heading him off for fear of his life, while the storm increased in fury, and the boys clung manfully to the wave-swept reef.

So far it was not an important dream. He was familiar with all this thing, but it went merrily on as dreams have a habit of doing, and as moving pictures are thrown on a screen by the biograph. There was Uel Bragg's tribe, first, second, and third crops. And his fox hounds that hunted rabbits, and his rabbit hounds that ran only foxes. There were many mouths in this tribe: Frank and Ben and Joe and Mamie, Emma, Alice, Fred and Harry, Hannah, Bob, Pink and Bogy, Spot and Spiver! And a dozen or so more he could not recall—twenty-three in all—oh, yes! and the “Nimshi!” But they were a good lot of kids, he decided, only full of the devil, as the old man used to say, and hard to keep track of—especially the “Nimshi.” Used to bore their ears, Uel told the neighbors, and made them wear a tin tag with a number on it, so he could tell when they were all at home at night.

Whisk! He was over to Carrie Page's (dear, dear Carrie!), in her hillside home, where all were welcome and where all was free. There was Charles Densmore, old Ezra, and the Old Squaw under the trees by the boulder. Down the dusty road was the old schoolhouse. It was recess time,

and there was Winnie, with her winsome ways and wisdom, and her vari-hued brood of chattering human chicks. * * * To the bonfire on the ice. The skating party, and the crowds of rustic youths and hoary patriarchs. He was cutting fancy scrolls with Mamie Smith and the Piper girls—Nina and Lil—and, oh, the jealousy of Johnny Reynolds! Now he was leading Otis Scruton and “Long-legs” Charlie a merry race around Croag’s island, while Gilman Thompson smoked his T. D., and passed the cider to Frank Marsh and Elder Sinkler, with Jennie and Alice leading in the merriment and song. * * *

Down to John’s. Up to Susan-Mari’s. A Euchre party at Carry-Ann’s—Euchre, Pitch, and Seven-up—with Nina nudging under the table, and Gilpin slipping the Joker to Hen, Warren Leivitt “rubbering,” and “Cud” Wilder keeping tally. That was twenty-five years ago, before Sue Jones’ girls were married off, and when there was peace and quiet in the land, and the farmers were happy and free.

And now it was a dance. Ah! the country dances! Over at John Downings, on the Neck. At the Harbor. Up to The Bridge. Away to Hardhack on a hay ride. A husking at Frank Jewell’s. Here he was again, living over all the old times, singing the old songs and dancing the old inspiring dances with the same old-fashioned maid-

ens, with their freckled necks and freckled noses, the rosy glow of rural health and rampant beauty in their round, hard cheeks. The fiddler in the entry rasping out "A Turkey in the Straw," and beating a rhythmic "thump, thump, thump," with his cowhide boot, at the same time calling off: "Barlance yer pardner'n swing up—'n—daown—th' center—awl—hands—'round." Rawny Fred Killyard prying himself around a ten-foot circle, one foot stationary, the other doing the prying, after the manner of a spring cockrel in a pullet pen, and taking with him in a mad embrace, little Rosie Brown, her feet a full yard off the floor. Oh, the freckles and the frolic! The apples and the cider! The red ear of corn and the kiss behind the door! Oh, the yesterday of life! Oh, the sweet, sad visions—made sadder by their very sweet-ness—of the joyous days of these recrudescent transpositions amid the silent scenes of wasted years, years that can never come back again—never, never more!

Following all of which there came another dream—another vision. It were a mercy if only it might have been but a dream—a vision. The picture came rapidly in regular order off the reel, flashed vivid and unerring on the mental canvas with all the realism of this wonderful mutoscopic sub-consciousness, and it came this night as it had come a thousand times before to

torture him and scourge him on toward his grave: The divine form and radiant features and sweet womanly grace of one too pure and true for life in a cruel world of beastly immorality and tinsel fraud. He saw again the liquid, hazel eyes with their heavy, dark lashes, beaming upon him full of love and beauty. He stretched forth his hands for the warm, soft press of the tender hands that used to fondle his tangled locks while he laved his greedy soul in the lavish gift of her girlish wifehood. It was the old hope of home and happiness that for twenty empty years had hungered his famished life, rustling dryly in his broken heart, like autumn leaves that cling on icy boughs in winter to rustle coldly in the sleet and wind.

Again he saw himself the round, rose-cheeked youth, a surge with the red fluid-fire of his nomadic strain, arm in arm, cheek to cheek, and heart to heart with this stainless rural beauty, basking in the hallowed sunshine of each other's wholesome love. All was hope. All was love. All was promise, and his faith in man and God had not been scant nor shaken.Flushed with youth and health, and conscious of a modest, manly pride both in himself and in his sweet, young bride, all the world was beautiful and filled with joy and plenty. * * *

And then came the old crash!

The world stopped, gasped, trembled in space then burst asunder! The heavens

fell down and the earth shot up to meet them! Crashing and smashing they fell together, and the dream went on. The stars, in a fusing meteoric galaxy of sputtering, sizzling fire, went spilling out over the world, mingling with the mangled fragments of human hearts, crushed, and torn and bleeding, and all festooned with gilded crosses and broken swords. Books with brassen clasps and with pages loose and fluttering, pages red with the blood of virgins, were being swept along into a great whirlpool together with red-labeled bottles from which spurted redder wines and yellow liquors. Bald-headed priests were trampling on the upturned faces of crying children. Mighty-muscled workingmen were beating back pussy, hog-like creatures in smooth black broad-cloth, who were snatching bread from the mouths of pale-faced women and naked babes.

And still the merciless Gehenna persisted. With the suffocating fumes of burnt powder choking him, a stream of white-hot metal poured through him from a cannon's mouth behind his back, worlds, rolling and tumbling through burning ether, swirled and curved and met in mid-air. Mountains shook and crumbled to dust. Lakes boiled and stood on end. The mighty ocean was sucked up into space and spilled out over the world with all the live sea monsters and fishes shredded to pulp and wriggling

in the throes of death. Forest trees hurricaned through the blistering tempest roots uppermost; and into this stifling cataclysmic caldron where fetid smoke curled in inky billows shot through with incessant flames of tongued lightning, Jason Sands was pinioned, helpless, speechless, and alone!

Consciousness left him. Down he sank into the boiling mass, down, down, for a million years! Then he was alive again. His ears caught far soft sounds. A spirit hand, cool and gentle, bathed his scorched forehead. Something touched his rigid lips and left a drop of sweetest nectar there. He opened his eyes, and there, beaming down upon him sweetly but sadly stood the one divine figure, and when he smiled she stretched her white arms out to him in silent longing. He could see her clearly now. The sun was shining on her glorious head, the promise of a sacred love—oft repeated—still radiating from the windows of her dear soul. Surely he was not dead, for it was Erma! But at that moment came a great shock—greater than all others which had gone before. The earth staggered, heaved and was parted at their feet, leaving a great and widening gulf between them. On the brink of the black maw she stood wildly calling. His heart was being torn as with talons. But he could not go her, and she could not come to him! * * *

There was a movement on the shelf in the cliff. A great red hand pushed back the folds of a frosted blanket. Eyes stared up into the blood-red sunshine—eyes that were sunken, and sad, and wet with icy tears. Minutes passed and there was no further movement. The eyes glared bewilderingly, the hand fingered the soft, mealy snow, and then the huge form of Jason Sands sat erect. The next instant he was on his feet. Bending over the cliff he looked down where the night before he had hovered between life and death. The wolves were gone! Not one remained.

“Clear case of cold feet,” he said, “I wish they had waited for me! Providence, your discipline is lax, and your emissaries are becoming unruly.”

The awakened dreamer was not long in deciding what to do. His foot was badly swollen and paining him. It needed immediate attention, but the best he could do was to loosen his mocassin and hurry to the Forks where stood Frank Durgen’s old cabin, and where he could have heat and shelter. There he would hold up for a day or two and give it proper dressing.

The weather had moderated, and the first faint hint of breaking winter was in the air.

At the Forks, he found the cabin occupied by an Indian—a small young squaw. Her man, she said, had gone to Dawson for

grub, and she was looking for him to return every day. They had run out of flour two months back, and the Canadian half-breed had packed the dust and left her, promising to be back with the supplies in fourteen days. It was three hundred miles, with spring trail and open country.

“Took the dust with him, did he?” repeated Jason after the guileless squaw. Then he changed the subject abruptly. That, then, was the secret of it! But he had not the heart to tell her, for he saw that her trust in the scoundrel was still unshaken, and he could afford to be merciful.

She would go to Dawson to look him up! In fact, she was packed and ready to start when Jason arrived.

“All right,” he said, “take this letter with you and I will give you much dust. I would go, too, but—” and he pointed to his swollen foot and the Indian knew. Opening his pack Jason poured her two hands full and heaped them up, from a sack of yellow gold—a full thousand dollars.

“There,” he said, “this is yours. Find the doctor and lay this letter in his hands. And see,” he admonished her, “many days must I suffer great trouble. Dawson is very far.” The simple child of Nature read his meaning ere he had spoken; and turning on her tiny snowshoes bade him keep watch and said:

“Toy bring Long Hair, sure, quick! Toy no 'fraid. Big Snow count sleep small (holding up her ten fingers), Indian foot much swift.” With this she was gone, and the man of many troubles was alone.

Ten days later Dr. Spanto and Jack Philips, accompanied by the young squaw, and with an outfit of twelve husky dogs and a well-laden sled, pulled into the Forks. It had snowed, but there were no tracks outside the little log hut.

In his early days Spanto had house-boated the Mississippi River from St. Louis to the Gulf of Mexico; and in those days—the happiest of his life he would maintain—he had first met Jack Philips and Jason Sands. Later, they had met in Dawson, Jason bound for a mythical El Dorado as yet undiscovered, and farther to the North, while the happy Spanto was content, as he put it, to “fry his bacon and wallop his dodger in his own skillet, and over a fire of his own making.” And in Dawson City he preferred to mine the miner—moderately—in return for his professional skill, to the more arduous methods of pick and fire-hole. Jason had not seen him in four years; but he knew him to be a true blue friend and comrade, and if still in the north country Toy would find him and he would move heaven and earth to come to his aid.

Jack Philips was also a Socialist, one of the kind that can usually be found working

at it. Also he was a close friend of Jason's, and when the doctor told him of their old friend's plight, Philips threw down everything and joined the rescue party in the three-hundred-mile race with death.

Jason and Philips had met in St. Louis, and, although they disagreed on about everything with the exception of Socialism, they railroaded together between St. Louis and Kansas City, and became firm friends. And now here they were meeting again in this God-forgotten corner of the world, after many years and many hardships in the individual strife for life.

After seeing the squaw on her way, Jason turned his attention to his wounded foot. Removing mocassin and socks he was horrified at the sight. Also the pain multiplied a thousand fold with the free circulation and the warmth of the fireplace. At first sight of the dark purple gash he felt the color recede from his face and he knew he was going to faint. There was a nasty sickness at the pit of his stomach and he was weak and vacillating. "Blood poison!" he said aloud. "And probably rabies, and possibly lockjaw!" Jason Sands had seen this thing before, and he knew the route of the victim of mad wolf-bite.

In the half-breed's bunk he found raw tobacco. This he soaked in hot water and bound on the wound: but the next day the foot was worse, and then he soaked the foot in hot water, the next thing in line

to do; but on the fifth day it began to turn black, and then he literally boiled the flesh from the bones!

When on the tenth day after the fleet-footed Indian girl had gone on her flying errand, she returned with help and stormed into the little shack, it was a pitiful sight that met their horrified gaze! The cabin was poorly lighted, and it was some moments before their "snow eyes" accustomed themselves to the sudden change. The doctor was the first inside the door, and at his first step he put his foot on something that moved under his weight and nearly threw him. A lighted match revealed a naked human foot! The desperate miner had waited until the last minute, and then, with his pocket knife, he had amputated the wounded foot at the ankle and tossed it toward the door!

Juarez Spanto was an Aztec Indian. Born in Old Mexico, he was a lineal descendant from the once great and powerful tribe of that name, which ruled that southern empire in the days before the Spanish conquest. He was a finely knit specimen of the now rapidly disintegrating breed, of medium height and with glossy black hair that hung in massive waves below his square shoulders. The practice of medicine with him was a pastime. He had inherited the love of it from his semi-savage forebears. It was the Science of Herbs, and

there was an herb for the cure of every ill. When he saw what Jason had done he was furious; but later agreed that, in all probability, and in the absence of the more scientific treatment, it was the only immediate means of relief, and that it had saved the man's life.

"I suppose the Christian Scientists would have us believe that there was never anything very seriously wrong with the foot, and that a little heavy thinking would have been sufficient to restore the foot as good as new, 'eh, Jack?'" challenged the Physicist.

"The Christian Scientist may be off his trolley in some respects, like all the rest of us; there are few perfect in this world. But I am of the opinion that he would deny the necessity of hacking off that foot, and I think I should agree with him," replied the unruffled Jack.

"I believe," ventured Jason, "they claim that 'good' is everything powerful, and that everything else is what they term 'error.' Therefore they might be expected to say, that, although the wolf had bitten the foot, the flesh being 'error'—a 'temporal unreality'—must have surrendered to 'good,' which is all powerful, being 'reality,' and 'infinite.' They could, on that assumption, reason that, the result of the bite could not have been serious owing to the fact that the bite being simply contact of tooth with flesh, and that both being 'error—matter,'

and therefore ‘unreality,’ must have been subordinate to ‘good’ which reposes in the mind.”

“There are many so-called ills,” responded Jack, “that are merely an unnatural condition of mind.”

Neither Jason nor the doctor seemed as yet fully converted to the think-remedy faith, and the doctor sacreliously offered the suggestion that, had the man fallen down among the several hundred ferocious beasts, and had they deigned to connect their many-fanged “error” with his one flesh “error,” according to past history anent the reputation of the wolf, it must have required some hot stepping on the part of his mental “divinity” to dissuade them and convince them of the “error” of their ways!

The Jason told a story on the Christian Scientists: “One day,” he said, “there were two little girls at play, when the mother of one of the little girls called to her. ‘I must go,’ said she, ‘for papa is sick, and mamma needs me.’ ‘Aw, he ain’t sick,’ encouraged the other, ‘he only thinks he’s sick!’

“The next day the two little girls met again, meanwhile the man had died. ‘How is your papa to-day?’ sympathetically inquired the one whose people were ‘scientists.’

“‘Oh!’ replied the other, tears filling her swollen eyes, ‘he just *thinks* he’s dead!’”

But Jack Philips, with his new-found “bug” theories, as Jason characterized them, was honest, and his fealty to the cause they both loved was none the less manifest and sincere because of their religious discrepancies. In this particular faith, like all the faiths, creeds, and doctrines that had attached themselves to the race and found favor, he knew Jack was but a seeker after the truth, and that his present philosophy of life—false or true—was simply a transition through which eventually he would pass, and which would land him high and dry above the fog. For Philips was a thinker, as well as a doer, and possessed a big, broad intellect, and a generous, loving heart. He loved all mankind with the genuine love of a brother, a friend, and a comrade, and with a love that was constant and real. More men like Jack Philips could only result in making the world a better and a sweeter place in which to live. The great goodness and faith of this simple-hearted boy-man only the more seemed to bear Jason out in his theory that, man, to-day, is not the man he desires to be, and that he *will* be under conditions more compatible with his ideals and aspira-

tions. He believed man is ever hopeful of the future. That he has ever striven for a goal which is an idealism wherein want shall be unknown, and where every man may look squarely in the eyes of every other man, knowing he is his friend.

Before amputating the foot, Jason had thrown an extremely effective tourniquet on his leg just below the knee with the raw-hide lacing of his mocassin. This precaution had saved his life. He had not acted in time in the heroic application of the knife, and the poison had reached the thick muscles of his calf before he performed the operation at the ankle. The flesh was the color of creosote. The eye of the trained physician and physicist needed but one swift look. Flashing a silent threat at Philips, he motioned Toy forward with his long instrument case. With a few positive orders to her, he turned to Philips with sweet serenity but firmness withal and commanded: "Jack, the wafty stuff don't go. Cut it out! Steady, now, there's not a minute to lose!" And Jack was silent.

When three months later the *Aurora* blew her screechy whistle, for "all aboard for down river," four passengers, the last to go on board, hustled up the gangplank together. The man in the lead wore crutches of enormous size, and his hair was the color of pure, white silk. Also his left trousers' leg was pinned up at the knee.

The man was too big and wide for the gangway, and had to edge his way between the narrow railings sidewise. The next in line was a big, jolly, good-looking boy-man with laughing eyes and a handsome double row of pearl white teeth set in a generous mouth above a square, strong jaw. His every look and movement bespoke manliness, courage, and great strength. Immediately behind him came a tall, spring-jointed, soldierly looking man with long black hair and swarthy skin; and following close on his heels came a small, pretty featured and neatly attired woman. She was also swarthy, but less swarthy than the man with the long hair, and her great dark, sensuous eyes and rose-tinted cheeks, belied the purity of the Indian blood and clearly reflected the infusion of the Spanish strain.

A great throng had pressed to the water's edge, for Dawson City was celebrating a wedding! God-speeding honeymooners requires much rice and many old boots; and though rice sold at a dollar a pound in Dawson, the quantity available was copious, and littered the deck along with the old boots until the footing in that quarter became extremely perilous. It was an eager sea of faces that clamored for a last look at the happy couple, and it was not without difficulty that the big boy-man finally persuaded the blushing Toy and grinning Spanto to appear at the starboard rail, as

the little stern-wheeler slued into the current and headed for the salt water two thousand miles away.

It was the month of August. The brief northern summer was at an end, and the more brief autumn was drearily dreaming out its evanescent reign.

To all but Jason Sands the trip down the wild Yukon was a delightful and romantic caprice. There was a time when to him it also would have been delightful; but that was when he was a whole man and possessed two legs and as many feet to walk on. Now what was he but the relic of his former self—a dereliction? It was all the same to him now. Each day was like its predecessor, and hours were so many cogs in the wheel of Time.

To the dare-devil Spanto, it revived vast recollections of other days—days of his early exploits and adventures on his house-boat in company with Billy Kirkendoll on the riotous waters of the Old Mississippi. Jack Philips was full of sunshine and optimism, and the passengers were uproariously entertained with his jovial companionship and inexhaustible wealth of wit and good stories. The little bride was radiant and happy. Her other man had lost all their dust on a game of chance in a gambling hell, and then lost his miserable life in a fight. When she went to the Mexican Spanto and related the circumstances, he



"To all but Jason Sands, the trip down the wild Yukon was a delightful and romantic caprice."

looked long and thoughtfully into the brightly burning embers of his warm fire, and a dark cloud gathered on his brow. Then, laying a hand gently on the bowed head before him said, simply: "Toy, come! I will be your man, and you shall be my Toy. You are good. I have much dust. We will be comrades." Whereupon the diminutive daughter of the wild dried her eyes, and fetching her blanket, laid it on his bed.

But poor Jason! He was an object of pity! He would sit for hours on deck, gazing steadily with a far-off look in his paternal eyes, oblivious to all save the anguish that ate into his heart and that was eating the heart out of him. In spite of all the rest of the little party could do to cheer him, he seemed constantly growing dispirited and morose. As the days went by, he became the very embodiment of dissuasion and sadness. "Brace up," Jack Philips would chirrup, "forget it, old boy, the blues don't get you anything, only nearer Salt Creek, and this craft ain't heading right to fetch that harbor; so come out of it, Comrade, and let's have a song."

"Think of it," chimed in the doctor one day, "only for little Toy, here, you would not be with us now. But here you are, a million times better than a dead man, and we are not going to desert you. We will see you through in safety, and you are

going to be with us when we take the world from the thieves who have stolen it, and when we usher in the Co-operative Commonwealth."

But Jason understood. And the more they tried to jolly him along, the deeper his grief sunk him in the quagmire of despondency. It seemed there was no escape for him, for the crew, and all the other passengers got the habit, and no one could pass him without parroting that detestable "brace up!" "Cheer up!" "Be jolly!" "Forget it!" "Smile!" "Remember there are others worse off than you!" "Laugh and the world laughs with you!" and all that garrulity of fools.

"How in hell can a man laugh?"

It was a beautiful afternoon, all hands were seated aft, the little boat coughing merrily along, when at a bizzare outburst of laughter from some of the crew, Jason turned to Jack Philips and literally took his breath away with the foregoing explosive interrogation. For a moment the happy-hearted Jack was speechless. The Mexican shot a swift glance at Toy, and that humiliate child of piety suppressed a little scream, and looked generously tolerant but mildly reproachful at Jason Sands.

"Oh! Big Snow," she chided, "Toy no hear Big Snow talk fire-talk before. Toy no like fire-talk. Please, Big Snow, try

laugh small. No be sorry. Toy sorry! Great *Padra* much sorry!"

Here the little tamed wildling crossed herself, and came and knelt beside Jason's chair.

"You are right, Toy," he said, "and I *am* sorry right now; for it is not manly to use so great an invention as the language of the human tongue in wasteful, senseless phrases. Besides, Toy, you believe that God heard me swear, and that he is worried about the welfare of my wicked soul? And that if I am good, and don't swear, we shall all meet in the Happy Game Preserve up yonder where there is plenty dust and much big hunting; eh, Toy?" The unsophisticated Toy looked up at the cruel jester wide-eyed, and with the joy of conquest beaming from an unsullied soul and nodded!

"Poor little wounded birds," he thought, "how easily their gilded wings are broken; but their superstitions and prejudices never! Oh, the obeisance of a blind belief! Alas for the fetish of faith, and the ignorance, and the false teaching!" The kind-hearted man of sorrows laid a hand on her raven-black hair and spoke to her in pure charity: "Toy, you have made me understand. I shall be a better man. When I die and—go to Heaven—I shall tell the good saints of you, and how you made your little feet fly to save my life; and if I should happen to be the first to go, I will

tell the Great *Padra* that you are very good and are coming too. And now you run and sit beside Doc, for he's beginning to be sorry too!"

Turning to Philips with feigned impatience, but without repeating the question, he demanded, naively: "Why don't you answer, Jack?"

"It's easy enough to laugh, Comrade, the world is beautiful and life is sweet, and everything would look bright to us if only we had love in our hearts. Look at me. I love everybody and everything, and everybody loves me. It was the teaching of the Nazarene." The doctor "huhed," audibly, and Toy fidgeted in evident anticipation of a volcanic eruption from that direction and Jack went on:

"You see, Comrade," he said, "*hate* has ruled the world so long that all mankind has come to look upon life as a fight, and we hear much about 'the struggle for life.' Men meet, not as brothers, but as enemies—antagonists. As if there were not room enough in the world for all of us to live in peace and amid plenty! I am a Socialist, because I recognize the injustice of the capitalist system, and the inevitability of its downfall and the establishment of the more sane and equitable system of co-operative human endeavor. But there is no reason why we who know the causes of things, as well as the remedy and the method of

the application of that remedy, should cling longer to the old hate philosophy. Love will accomplish much more good for the cause than can be achieved by any other method."

"How about the fellow I catch picking my pockets?" fumed the Aztec. "How about the conscienceless degenerate who violates my confidence and my friendship? How about that rat-eyed cur that dragged her (pointing to Toy) from her people, beat and starved her, then finally shook her three hundred miles from nowhere, went on a drunk and to an unmarked grave? Expect a sane man to *love* cattle of that stripe? I tell you it is unnatural and impossible. *A cada malo su did malo!*"

"You are right, Doc, and you are wrong. It is true, as you say, that, 'the evil doer shall know his evil day.' But in the surrendering of the point, my position only becomes the stronger. Listen: I am not a believer in the crime of punishment. Man does not commit evil from choice, but because of necessity, or what he imagines to be necessity. Evil is not of human nature but of *Inhuman* nature. It is the beast-man and not the god-man at riot in the china-shop of human morals. Man is ever fleeing away from the Beast. He is ever seeking higher levels. 'The evil conscience needs no accuser;' and the evil day of the evil doer shall be the day when he reviews his

shameful handiwork in the light of truth and reason.”

“But there are some men, I tell you, who are absolutely devoid of conscience. Right and wrong to them has become simply a question of, ‘how much will it pay.’ Morals don’t enter into the deal at all. It is simply a viewpoint, anyway, an economic viewpoint, focused from a selfish angle. These men are a menace to society; do you mean to tell me that you want such men to run at large, and that they should not be punished?”

“Man is a creature of environment, Doc, and his course in life is shaped by his contact with life, not from the inner promptings of his better nature. He is molded from without, not from within. Read Twain’s ‘What is Man?’

“No, I do not believe in punishment. We have been punished too much already—usually for the crimes of others. A man cannot be blamed for fighting for his life. For he finds himself being fought, and until the cause of the fight is removed, the fight will go on, and on, and he who will not fight must submit to inevitable annihilation. But he who fights for more than life fights in ignorance, and he should be suppressed and educated, not punished. Under a sane and equitable arrangement of industrial and economic co-operation, he would not

need to fight; so, instead of strife and hate, his course would be governed by peace and love.”

“Oh, I understand all that. Say, you make me tired! You always run away off on a round-about rampage among a lot of parenthetical sidetracks, to begin expounding Socialism to *me!* As if I were not a Socialist already, but some ignorant chief justice, senator or professor, or even a Roosevelt! What I cannot understand, and what you have a habit of dodging, is, how you can expect we are to love and treat gently, the brutal fiend who interferes with our personal efforts to earn an honest living. I know it is the capitalist system which brutalizes men—all of us—more or less—the whole race. But if one of the more brutal and ignorant of the beasts oozes a stiletto down the back of my neck and takes my watch and dust, I want you to explain to me by what process of mental hypnotism I may so twist the law of self-defense as to excite in me a great and undying love for this particular human hyena?”

“Very well, old boy, I will tell you once for all, and if you will follow me closely, then think it over for a long time—seriously, now, Doc—you will see that I am right, and instead of hating this poor, weak brother, you will come to pity, and even to love him. You will find yourself reaching out to him with the torch of reason, just

as I am doing. This is Love conquering the world—Love, the God of Humanity."

At this point Jason began to exhibit unmistakable signs of a deep, and growing interest in the discussion—an interest such as he had not manifested in anything since the loss of his good left leg. He liked Philips, but he had never been able to see through this love-of-an-enemy logic, and he was all attention now that it was about to be laid bare.

The little boat had passed Fort Yukon, which is the junction of the Yukon and Porcupine rivers, where the waters widen out into what amounts almost to a shallow lake, long and narrow, and filled with small islands for a distance of ten or more miles. This lake-like stretch of sluggish water is called "The Flats," or, more properly speaking, "Yukon Flats." Navigation through "The Flats" is always considered a dangerous procedure at best. The hundreds of sand bars are constantly shifting, and it is not an infrequent occurrence for steamers to scrape their bottoms on these bars, or go aground dead. Complete wrecks are matters of current history.

At Fort Yukon, Capt. Anderson shipped a large consignment of bullion from the Fort Yukon Mining and Milling Co. for the Commercial Trust Co., of Washington, at Seattle.

There was nothing out of the ordinary in the appearance of any of the six passengers

who came aboard at that point, more than that they were rough-looking men, unshaven and generally unkempt in accord with the custom of miners of that north country. But the Mexican, Spanto, eyed them sharply. Toy exhibited an unmistakable uneasiness whenever they appeared on deck, and, somehow, Indians seem to know. Jason noticed her watching them and remarked to Philips that there was something out of tune aboard ship. And while the crowd drew near to hear Jack preach, he turned to his comrade and remarked, in a low whisper:

“Jack, there is a born criminal—a man with an inherited aspiration to kill. He might easily be the son of a priest, sucking his first milk from, and cradling his head on the hairy breast of a she gorilla.” As he spoke he pointed over his shoulder to a hercules with a thick mat of black whiskers and beady black eyes which almost came out of the same socket, and which seemed to see everything at once without looking at anything in particular.

“Hell,” he went on, “will heave a sigh of relief when that blessed brigand joins the golden harp orchestra up among the immaculate wing-wafters of the favored few.”

“Man,” Philips began again, “is but an animal. But he is a progressive animal. Also, he is the most virtuously ignorant of

all the animal kingdom, for he is the only species in the universe which has to be "civilized." All other forms of life come into the world with an inherited instinct for life's full measure, an intelligence that, in many respects, by far surpasses that of man. Now, then, man has to be taught. He may be taught truth, or he may be compelled to believe a lie instead of the truth. If he is taught the truth in the beginning he will be progressive and you can never hang a lie on him; but he will soar on to heights of intellectual grandeur, leading his fellows up and out who flounder in the fog of error and false teaching. Teach him a lie in the early days of his life when his mind is plastic and susceptible, and the task of unlearning that lie and replacing it with truth is by no means an easy one. Especially becomes this a task when the victim absorbed it from a source in which he had grown to confide, as in the case of the sucking babe who comes to know and turns in confidence to its mother's breast.

"Capitalism is a false teacher of life. It is a liar! Life under such a regime is a lie. It teaches, not life, but death. It teaches, not truth, but error and falsehood. It muddles the brain, confuses the intellect, and drives men to crime, loads them down with disease and puts them into premature graves. It sets every man against his brother in the so-called struggle for life.

It poisons the generations that are, with adulterated foods, and it poisons the generations yet unborn with ignorance and mental pollution. It suppresses and holds down Art, Literature, Science and Love, and rides, rough shod over the morals of the race. It teaches race-hatred and class-hatred; it fosters prostitution and perpetuates slavery wherever it holds sway.

“Now, a Socialist is a progressive person who has found out some new truth, who has repudiated the old lie, and who is moved by the spirit of human welfare to teach that truth to his fellows. Should he, then, continue to hold on to the old false reasonings—unreasonings—of the old hate and antagonisms of Capitalism, or do you not think more interest may be engendered in behalf of the new education by projecting the more transcendent expedient of sympathy and brotherly love? How may we best reach the ignorant and the vicious and the apathetic, by force and hatred? Which of the two teachers will be the more successful with the pupil; the one who manifestly loves and takes pleasure in the teaching, or he who wields the big stick and hues to the rigid rule?”

“Then it is a matter of tactics, pure and simple, is it—an expedient for the gaining of your selfish ends—that you would have those whom you are pleased to class as ignorant believe you love them?” piped a

little weazened, nervous man, one of the six who came aboard at the Fort.

"No, my friend," Jack replied, "it is grand and ennobling to love all nature and all things in the universe; and a more pitiful sight I cannot conceive than the man, in a world of progress and knowledge, so ignorant and purblind as to openly oppose those who are giving their lives for his best interests. They are men who are trying to help him on to a higher plane, and he bites the hand that would save him. I pity such a creature. More, I love him; for he is a member of the race—my race—and I never forget that I once was like him, and as ignorant as he—possibly more so. It is my duty to love him, because he *is* blind, and being blind, he is helpless to see his way. We who know and can see are strong. Some day we all shall see, and then there will be no weaknesses and no error among men."

"Say, Jack, why don't you go back to St. Louis, take out a license and go to preaching? You've about got me converted to that loveology dope of yours, already," cynically teased the exasperating Spanto. "And," he frolicked on, gaily, "if to love the guy that pinks you in the back is such fine medicine for the regeneration of the race, what's the matter with teaching the habit to that particular individual, and infusing him full of the love idea, first? And the trust barons? And all the rest of the

grafters and other first citizens and unhung criminals? Now honest, Jack! You've signed a big contract. There's pretty much everything else in this world in great profusion except real love. I'm beginning to pity you—I am, really, Jack. But this may be taken to mean that you are winning all the time; for, you know," pestered the merciless Spanto, "pity is one of the ingredients in the love-compound, and when administered without ether, acts directly on the palpi of the epidermis, exercising a laxative influence on the *lariats* of the heart."

At this grotesque sally the crowd laughed heartily at what they appeared to take for a good one on Philips; but the sunny Jack only grinned good-humoredly, and slying a cunning wink at the Indian bride came back at the recreant and somewhat tardy benedict, with: "I think you'd better give in, Doc, if that last splurge of yours is the best you have to offer. For recent events seem to indicate that, even the biggest rogues are sometimes the least immune from the intrenching meshes of the love-compound, as you are pleased to term it." A little ripple of merriment escaped the lips of the modest Toy, who sprang up and darted forward and around the pilot house. At this the fun broke out anew, and everybody turned on the herb-man. "Take the money, Jack," he surrendered, "I'm stung! And

now that the question is before the house, let someone tell us what this thing love is, anyway."

Up to this point Jason Sands had remained silent and passive. Love, to him, was a sacred thing. To treat the subject lightly, were desecration. When the flurry of levity had subsided, he turned to his comrades, removed the sombrero from his hoary head and opened his mouth to speak, just as the piercing scream of a woman, followed by a splash and a smothered gurgle, silenced every tongue and struck terror to the hearts of all. Instantly there was a shock! The boat shivered, rose on her heel, and amid belching billows of yellow smoke and the sound of crashing wood came the roar of a stunning explosion! Confusion—that's the word—mad riot and indescribable confusion reigned. To add to the horror, if such were possible, rose the cry of "ship on fire," and "the ship is sinking!"

It was twilight. The smoky haze in the southwest marked where the sun had been an hour ago. The murky shadows falling on the river through the nude treetops on the bank, looked like the wagging jaw of some snag-toothed giant witch gloating over the ill-fortunes of the race. All were thrown off their feet when the bow went skyward. When the ship righted and lurched forward again, it was at an angle of several degrees, and with a jolt and a

shudder that rolled all hands in a heap against the engine house.

The boat had been blown up with some high explosive, and when she righted after the frightful impact of the charge, she trembled, balanced her ponderous hulk briefly like a drunken sailor then dived with her broken nose straight for the bottom of the river!

CHAPTER IV.

THE LAST LEAF.

Far through the boding gloom
Suddenly a great light appeared!

It was a queer-looking piece of first-class mail matter that Lone Mooney, the new rural carrier, left at Raven Roost one glorious September afternoon, and it was a puzzled and deeply interested mountain farmer who received it.

Leland Tannerhill was not a literary beacon. His mail was a very inconsiderate item of importance in the daily mull of his lonely life. So, when the slattern youth rudely kicked a huge package over the wagon wheel at him without thawing out enough to pass the time of day, he eyed the numerously stamped and generously penciled thing with wonderful scrutiny. It was a new one on him, and he was clearly stumped.

Leland was a subscriber to the *Ashworth Item*, Happyman's *Aberrant*, and the *Montly Gopherhole*, the latter, an alleged journal for tillers of the soil, published at O'Fallon, Ill. The *Item* was the "old reliable," printing the "news," which news comprised: Births, Deaths, and such

other information as interests nosey people, and sheriff sales, etc.

The *Aberrant* was all its adapt cognomen implied, and more. In addition to its local column, which never failed to inform its readers that, Buttertoad Smith, of Centre Harbor Neck, was visiting "relatives and friends" at Hinklyville; that Tommy Soagden, of Kittery, would spend a few days at the Tie Ranch near Foggs Station, all sandwiched in between the market fluctuations on cow peas, labor and Berkshire shoats. It was, like its profligate editor, a notorious liar. It strictly abstained from printing anything resembling truth, satisfying its gormand lust for scandal by attacking the character of every decent citizen who was not a subscriber, and some who were. Also, it was a past master at misrepresenting the opposition political parties, fairly engulfing itself with paroxysms of benevolent solicitude for the "worthy" poor, just prior to election.

However, it was a fair sample of the average country newspaper, and its infliction on the rural populace was, with few exceptions, borne, either in silent contempt, or with grudging tolerance.

These three publications—if such they may be called—, together with an occasional spavin cure almanac, tax assessments, and the monthly pew rent duns, comprised Leland's regular annual mail. A letter he

had not received since far beyond his recollection.

No word of greeting spoken, the rickerty old buggy cramped around the well curb in the middle of the dooryard and was slowly squeaking along toward the gate at the end of the lane, when Tannerhill suddenly straightened up, and pushing back a sweat-begrimed palm-leaf hat, called sharply: “What’s your hurry, Lone? I hain’t seen you fer some time. How’s yer father?”

At first sound of the man’s voice, the old grey mare seemed suddenly to remember something! She sat back in the britchen with a “chug,” all four feet braced on the steep incline, and stopped—short. Likewise, the wagon stopped. Then the new government attache, together with the assorted and classified mail he had stacked up on the seat beside him for handy delivery, stopped—that is, began to stop—stopped after a while, a little farther on down the hill! The rawney sapling scrambled from under the horse’s feet, and Leland turned his back and laughed, silently, though perceptibly, with his shoulders—an eccentricity characteristic of some generously modest and charitable men. Meanwhile, angry youth and grey mare proceeded to go through the formality of adjusting their respective differences of opinion concerning mail clerk etiquette, lax horsemanship and general horse sense. When the ether had

cleared, the older man ventured, by way of oiling the troubled waters: "When d'ge start in fer Uncle Sam, boy? Like the job?" Ignoring the other's interrogations, the novice United States wage-slave—pro tem.—red and wrathful, shied a casual observation at the smoking sun, prophesied the intelligence that it looked "laowry fer tumorrer," clucked, softly, to old Kate and went weaving easily down Winding Hill. The stoic Leland watched the receding outfit cross the last pitch-pole at the bottom and go clattering off on the New Road and in to the Jewell woods.

There are some things slower than others in this world, and things do not move with as much celerity in the New Hampshire hills as they do at Reno and on Wall Street. Tannerhill did not open his mail at once, but seated himself on the well-curb and regarded it long and thoughtfully. Painstakingly he spelled out the characters—blurred and soiled among the stamps—that made up his name and address.

"Who this side o' the Promised Land can thet air be frum!" he meditated. Then espying the return address in the upper left hand corner, he paused, traced it out with a gnarled index finger and read.

If Not Delivered In Six Months, Return to

BENJAMIN B. PAGE

High Heath,

"Broken Bone Mine,"

Alaska, U. S. A.

Leland Tannerhill was a good man. It was said of him that he could not kill a chicken without shedding tears. It was his boast that he had never struck a living thing a blow in all his life. Also he boasted he could pick up any hen on the place, anywhere, and at any time of day or night. All the animals about Raven Roost attested their confidence in their master's love and kindness, by every conceivable form of friendly demonstration. Even the wild robins knew him as their friend and would eat from his hand. Imagine, then, the surprise of the great Brahma rooster, when he sauntered up to peck at the rawhide ends on the gruesome bundle, and like lightning, and without warning, got a vicious kick from one of Leland's size-10 cowhides. So indignant and frightened was the lordly chanticleer, that he squalled out the customary danger signal in case of hawks with such vehemence as to enlist the entire barnyard population in a wild discordant chorus that lasted an hour. But Leland Tannerhill heard it not. Too absorbed was he in a futile effort at fathoming the mystery of the strange prize that had come so far through the mails, unsought, unannounced, and from a stranger.

Long and silently the good man sat there in the shade of the great maple and cudgled his brain with thought. Carefully turning the mental pages, he ran back over

the long, weary years of an uneventful life, but years, forsooth, filled with sadness, loneliness, and toil. Vainly did he try to recall some ancient promise of a forgotten friend; counting them back, one by one, as they had died off, and all he could think of among the living. It was no use. They were gone! None of the chums he could think of bore the unfamiliar name of Benjamin B. Page, and the mystery deepened with each rereading of the alien legend in the upper left hand corner of the soiled paper wrapper.

Twice had he started to open it, turning it over and over to find the right end of the string, and twice had he subsided with great gravity and meditation. "Page, Page! Benjamin Page!" ponderously repeated the baffled recluse, over and over again, as if to familiarize his tongue with the strange articulation, the better to resurrect a possible memory—long since dead—of some person by that name.

Slowly raising his snow-white head, Leland Tannerhill looked out over the vast panorama to the horizon before him. He knew every intervening hill, lake, river and valley. Also, he knew, as he soliloquized, "every neighbor old and new for forty mild around; but Mr. Page must a bin afore my time, or else he's somebody that went off out West when I was too young to recollect, maybe. Anyway," he concluded, "nobody

I ever knowed ever had any sich a bell hung on 'em, and the marster on't is, that they should know me, whoever they be."

Raven Roost (so named by old Bart Tannerhill's beautiful daughter) stood, like a fort, on the top of a low lying hill among the higher mountains. The buildings were at the far end of a lane leading up the west slope from a tiny schoolhouse on the main thoroughfare and painted red, the back sill of which rested on a granite ledge, while the front was propped up with piles of cobble-stones six feet high, and that wabbled and threatened to collapse and send it tumbling down into Dan Willoughby's sap orchard.

The Tannerhills had helped to settle the country in the early days of the flint-lock and the bow. But the strain had dwindled. Of the latter generation there were but two children: Erma, whose name for twenty years had not been spoken, and Leland, the only survivor. He was a big man, with great freckled hands and a big warm heart; but he had never married. He had stayed there on the old place alone after the others had gone, one by one, visiting never, and being visited seldom more often, he was a sad and silent man. He was the last leaf on the tree—the last leaf, and it was autumn!

He turned his eyes westward, and there stretched the Prescott range, with Mount

Prospect in the foreground. Looking to the south, he could see Sheapards and the Asquam Castle on the summit. To the east in the valley lay beautiful Squam Lake, stretching its clear waters with its three hundred and sixty-five islands from "Joe's" point, under the Lone Pine Hill, to Bearcamp on the north, and under the dark brok of old Chickwolnepy. He could count up all the old schoolmates. And he ran over the list to make sure: There were the Sanborns, and the Mudgetts, the Bennetts, and the Howe boys, George and Olando. And then there was "Gingerbread Red," who lived on the Mountain Brown place, and who wore the fuzzy red homespun breeches dyed with butternut bark. Bill Low and the Wallaces, Hattie Smith and Mamie Stevens—yes, and the Lee girls, Hattie and Susie. O, he could remember them all right, but they were gone!

That was in the old days before the city folks came and bought up all the country for summer camps. It was different now. Every one of the wild, wooded islands in the lake had been gobbled up and were covered with cottages. Every farm on the white sandy shores of the dear old lake was in the clutches of millionaires, who carried their heads high and their noses higher, as if they smelt a stink. The pampered sons and daughters of these plunder-

ing parasites tore through the hills in their great touring cars, frightening the country horses and killing the farmers' fowl with impunity.

Raven Roost was severely shunned. In fact, it was said to be haunted. That the old Puritan mansion had gained its uncanny reputation because of having been named by his beloved sister, Erma, was no secret to Leland. She had so named it in honor of Poe's Raven, which, being a poet of rare genius herself, she used to declare to be the masterpiece of the "Poor Poet of Sorrows." Haunted or not haunted, Leland Tannerhill continued to live alone in the big square house, in peace, and unafraid. Cultivating as much of the rich, black soil as one man could comfortably care for, he allowed the rest to grow up to bushes. Owing no man a cent in all the world, he had no enemy as far as he knew on earth. Moreover, and as he had grown to realize with the passing years, he had no friends. "Not a single, solitary soul in all the world since the days of Sis and Jason Sands," he would cry aloud. "I am here alone! Jason was the last and he too must be dead."

A glance toward the west revealed but half of the red disk slipping down behind Plymouth Mountain. The chickens so noisome just now had gone to roost under the cow-shed by the barn, and were quar-

reling because the older cockerels, as usual, were unmercifully pecking the immature youngsters and crowding them off the perches. They did this nightly in their selfish efforts to gain some vantage point beside a plump, red-combed pullet.

It was getting late.

The shadows grew longer and deeper over the glassy lake. The melancholy tinkle, tinkle of the brass cowbell in the lane grew louder among the sleepy nightsounds of the verdant mountain. Leland heard, and knew that old Bess was at the pasture bars with her load of pure, rich milk. Night was coming on. It was time to do the chores.

With the woodbox refilled, the milk strained and put away and a fresh pail of water on the sinkboard, Leland drew his chair up to the kitchen table and turned all his attention to the bulky thing before him. Taking from his pocket a wire nail, he proceeded to untie the moosehide thong, picking out each knot and foregoing the cutting of any, abundant though they were and hard. The string off whole at last, there was yards of it. "Five, eight—ten," he calculated, as he economically untwisted every quirk and wound it around his big left hand, then into a tight ball. He was in no hurry. It could not escape him, this new-found treasure from the top of the world, and he would take his time and learn all about it as he went along. Minutely

examining the thin rawhide through his reading glasses, he critically ran the ball of his thumb along the grain side for hairs, then he tried to break it. He wound several feet of it around his hands and pulled on it with all his might over the bend of his knee. But the faithful rawhide—the one cord that never breaks—though the day was dry, stretched beautifully and the tell-tale red marked where it sank deep into the toil-hardened hands, but it would not break.

“Buoy ‘tunder!” blasphemed the pious Leland. “Thet air thing never growed on no caow, ner hoss, nuther!” And then he tried it once more. This time standing up and taking several turns around his hands, he dropped the loop under his boot, and with all his terrific strength he pulled—hands, arms, back and legs—until his face purpled and the tears came; but the slender rawhide went with him and came back and was not broken. The saving farmer smiled his pleasure, walked to the corner where a clock ten feet high was standing where it had stood for fifty years, opened the door in the bottom and dropped the ball in among the weights.

Turning sharply to face the clock, the man started as if a sudden thought had struck him, as a reminder of a tardy mission that must be fulfilled. “Your’re late tonight, Leal.,” he admonished himself. Then lighting a smoky lantern, though it

was not yet dark, and slipping a small, black object under his arm from the mantel-shelf, he shot a swift weather-glance at the sky through the west window and was gone.

He did not lock the great oaken door. In fact, it was never locked. He paused a moment among the rose-bushes, then turning into a well-worn path was soon lost among the trees. This was his nightly errand. He had not missed this duty but once in twenty years, and that was when the fever had him on his back.

It was far into the night when the red glow of the lantern came out of the maple growth above the meadow and vanished into the old house. And what of his surprise on returning to find a second package from Alaska addressed in a different hand but bearing the same return address as the first! The two were lying side by side on the table, and the only way to account for it was that the carrier had overlooked the smaller one on his first trip, and had called on his return and left it while Leland was absent. It was unimportant anyway. He would lose no time in idle speculation. Tearing the wrapper from the first, he fell upon a strange collection of letters, papers, poems and songs, essays and stories; all save the letters bearing the unmistakable signature of Jason Sands. Also there was a letter addressed to himself, and with greedy haste and trembling hands he opened it and read:

“Alaska, April 22nd, 1910.

“‘Broken Bone’ mine.

“Dear Leal:—

“It has been a long time since you heard from me, for they have kept me moving on and on, always moving on from place to place over the earth, hither and yon like the chaff on the winds of the wild prairie. This is the fate of the man who works for wages. This is the fate of the man who dares to dream. It is the fate of twenty millions of human souls in America, and I am one of them!

“I have never ceased to think of you, as I have never ceased to think of our dear lost Erma. I remember your promise to me on the day that she said goodbye, that you would keep the roses she loved so dearly blooming above her cold clay. I know you have not forgotten, and I am coming back to see you once more and to tell you that I cannot find our boy.

“Four years ago I came to this grave of last resorts, where everything is frozen all the time and where the fire went out on the first Saturday night when God quit work on the world. There is gold enough here to plate the earth, and I have some of it; but it is all frozen in, and only a few succeed where many fail.

“Tonight I shall start afoot for Dawson, four hundred miles away. The boat will take me down the river from there, and

once on the outside, I shall lose no time in reaching you.

“This package contains all my personal property save what is in my pack and on my back. I am entrusting all to my friend and partner, Benjamin Page, who will have it mailed to you by the first dog outfit through the pass. I thought it safer this way, as I am going on foot and alone and you never can tell. Take care of it till I see you, old boy, for, as you will see, there are some things therein contained more sacred to me than life itself. I have kept them, spitball notes and all, and they have gone with me wherever my feet have trod. You are at liberty to read them, for you know all the sad story and you and I are one.

“If nothing happens I should reach Raven Roost early in September; so be on the lookout for me, and remember I am your old friend and brother,

“JASON SANDS.”

So it was from *him* at last! Leland Tannerhill’s joy knew no bounds! He read the missive over and over, again and again. *He* was *coming home*—Jason Sands! His heart beat faster, and he could hear it pounding against his breast like a drum. He laid the letter down, and with lamp in hand entered the front room, whose weather-worn shades had not been opened since the last funeral, and turning the

leaves of an ancient plush-covered album until he came to an old-fashioned double picture, he gazed reverently upon the two faces. With the album still open before him, and palsied with emotion, he sank to his knees, raised aloft his trembling right hand in earnest appeal and cried out wildly, almost incoherently: "O Heavenly Father! Keep Jason Sands and fetch him back safe to me. I want to see him once more here, and then I'm willin' ter go!" Then drawing the picture from its old place in the album, he turned it over and read two names written in a clear, bold hand on the back "Erma and Jason." Below the line this, also, was written in a soft, feminine hand and with violet ink: "He, and She."

"There they be, the two on 'em," he said, great tears clinging to his sun-brownèd cheeks.

"If God only knowed how thet man has suffered he'd give her back to him now I know," he went on hysterically. "No two children ever lived thet thought as much of one another as them air two lovin' ones did, and there weren't none better ever drawed the breath o' life than either on 'em." Poor Leland! His broken heart was bleeding anew. For if ever a brother loved a sister it was he; and no brother could have more loved Jason Sands than did this brother of Erma. In the picture, Jason was seated in a rustic chair, his great shoulders thrown



“He gazed reverently upon the two faces.”

back advertising the secret pride their possessor felt in the consciousness of his manly strength and in the companionship of his handsome mate. And there just back of him, stood the beautiful young creature, eyes aglow with happiness, her arm stealing slyly around his shoulder and just the tips of her fingers showing through his curly hair. She was loving him there in the picture.

"Poor Erm," he said, "You're in Heaven, God bless ye, and I'll try to wait; but I only hope it won't be long arfter Jase comes. I'm tired, Erm, I be, God help me!"

Closing the album he went back to his letters in the kitchen. He knew her handwriting, and all the letters addressed to Jason he piled together. He had seen them all before. In fact, he had helped her in their writing, keeping watch at the head of the stairs for the old folks and stealing away to Jason's with them at dead of night when all was still. It was a clandestine correspondence—clandestine with the cunning codes of lovers' sweet intrigue. Drawing a thin one from among the many thick ones, he began to read again the faded lines across the soiled envelope, but it was too much! The arms stretched out across the table and the snow-white head sank down upon them. Heavily the massive shoulders heaved with emotion as the lonely and be-

reaved brother sobbed out the bitter anguish of his broken heart. The hours of night slipped swiftly away with the tolling of the old clock in the corner. The shoulders ceased their heaving, and began to rise and fall evenly with the deepdrawn breathing. The goddess of rest had mercifully touched the troubled brow and the sinless son of sorrow was sleeping.

It was the breakfast call of old Bess in the barnyard three hours later that aroused him from his slumber to face two burning lamps and the sun an hour high over Red Hill.

To milk and get the cow out, feed the chickens and the pigs, was the work of but half an hour. Meanwhile, water boiled in the teakettle, and with a breakfast of ham-and-eggs, biscuits, coffee, and a pint of warm fresh milk, Leland attacked the second package, which as yet he had not opened. The first thing to catch his eye was this letter from Ben Page:

“Mr. Leland Tannerhill,

“Dear Sir:—

“I don’t know you nor you don’t know me; but when you get this you will know that I ain’t no schoolmarm. I wouldn’t bother nobody with my poor writin’, only, you see, Jason Sands was my pard, and he’s cut traces and flew, and I’m skat and worried about him, for wolves is thicker’n hell hereabouts and nothin’ but them and sich

fools as I be can live here. God never cal'lated on nothin' but them there gant-gutted hellcats and jack rabbits for this yere country, and Jason showed good sense in quittin'.

"But that ain't what I started out to tell about, exactly, and right here I want you to know that it ain't no snap for me to write letters no how. So, the whole thing in a nut shell, as they say, is, that I got mad like a damn fool and run off from Jason, and while I was makin' faces at myself and ponderin' over comin' back, Jason he ups and lights out. He left a letter for me that it took me four days to read and that nobody can understand, and wanted me to mail all his stuff to you. I reckon he's struck for Dawson and the outside, and probably will fetch up at your place if he ain't eat up on the way out, and if he ain't, most probably he allows to hit the first boat down behind the ice. I wisht he had a waited; for the hole he was burnin' was jist a foot from a pocket when he quit, and when I struck it the yeller showed on the pick pint like it was plated; and that there hole looks like the show winder of a city hawk joint. I picked up a hatful in fifteen minutes, and the sample I'm sending you you keep and write as soon as you get it, so I will know you get the rest of Jason's literchure dope and the Indian moccasins and the rest I dug out of his bunk and stuffed in the bundle.

“I ain’t goin’ to fret much about him, for Jason Sands ain’t afeared of nothin’, and he can fight wolves to beat hell. But he was a good pardner, and I kinder feel bad about the way I acted, and miss him after three years with him, fightin’ agin God’s carelessness and them there ravin’ fiends and only one spat. He was a regular crank on poetry, and used to tear it off to me by the yard of a evenin’, sad and pityful like by times, specially that purty stuff ‘bout love and sich like. I tell you it would nigh break a body’s heart and give you the Jimmies to hear it when the spirit took him. He never used terbarker, nor drinked, and never sent out for much but pencils and paper and cartridges, no time; but he sure did like to write.

“Now he never told me a word about his inner secrets until he writ that letter, but he was allus rantin’ about politics and economics and that there rot, and I think he must be a arnikist, and is agin religion; for we fit over the Bible and what he said religion was invented for. He said religion was invented by some barbarians or thieves or suthin’, so as how them slick cusses that never does nothin’ but work with their brains could rob everybody that worked with their hands by makin’ the laws to suit, and the damn fools would think it was God’s will! I come right back at him good and hard and asked him to tell me how we

ever could get along without them high-flown gentlemen that's rich to hire us if we driv 'em off and took possession as he proposed, and he hollered and laughed like a idiot and asked me what in hell I wanted somebody to hire me to burn my own hole and then to wash up my own dust for?

"Anyway, there wern't no better than he, take him all round, ever walked the earth, even if he don't believe in God. Mebbe he had good reasons for thinkin' that way after all, for he claimed to be one of them there scientist philos'fers or whatever you call 'em, and there ain't no use argyin agin 'em for they got you skinned erry way you tackle 'em. Besides, suthin' had hit him purty hard sometime in his life, for he wern't happy a minute while I knowed him, but was allus mopin' around like he hadn't a friend on earth. His letter shows it too, and I guess I was wrong.

"Now I never was much on mind readin'. But the way that there letter winds up, it don't appeal to me as bein' jist right, some-way; and so, if you get this o. k. before he lands, I'd kinder keep an eye out for your old friend for he saved my life wornst when I was froze and starved most to death up on the Hedghog. I'll never forget him, even if he did say he'd rather go to Hell with a clean record than to Heaven along with them there 'Big Stick' square deal fakirs that got the Maine blowed up.

“You and him must a bin good friends, for he allus spoke of you whenever he got the blues and had them awful dreams.

“Yours truly,
“BEN PAGE.”

“P. S.—There’s a fortune in sight on our property—Jason’s and mine—, and half on’t is hisn; for he divided his chuck with me when he needed it all his self, and I can’t tech his half now we’ve struck it rich and luck’s changed. I’m sending the letter Jase left for me, to you, and if you say so, I’ll go to Dawson and sell the mine and go on a sure enough hunt for that boy of his. Or we’ll wait and leave it all to his dad, whichever you say.

“B. P.”

Tannerhill was thoroughly aroused. The prospect of Jason coming thrilled him and filled him with boyish glee. But Page’s letter displeased him. In fact it nettled him.

“Gold!” he fairly growled, and repeated the ugly word again and again. “He sent me a sample, did he! Well, I’m much ’bliged, Mr. Page. But I don’t need it jist yit, and as fur’s writin’ to you’s concerned, we’ll see to that later.” Whereupon, he returned to the task of going through the packages.

“Gold!” Give him the “pizen” stuff and he would make short work of it! Hadn’t he seen enough trouble on account of it?

What of—Her, his poor, lost sister! What of the banker down in the village who died in rags after spending a fortune shielding that coward son of his that shot Jason, only to read in the papers that he in turn got himself shot in a “fast” house in Boston!

“Gold!” he fumed on. “Torment their money! It can never give back what it took from me and Him. Jason’n her’d a bin happy only for the greed o’ thet cussed yarler dross. Mother couldn’t see through it though, how thet them air young folks was goin’ to be happier with their likes for one another, than Sis would a bin to be the wife o’ that sponge-faced worm-head with all his tainted gold. And to think that Jason Sands would run away off up there on top o’ the north pole, a freezin’ and a starvin’ to death is beyend me, by Judas! It’s curis, mighty curis!”

The man was much agitated. And when a huge bright nugget rolled out from among the letters and papers and fell with a leaden thud to the floor, he snatched it up with the evident intention of throwing it, either into the stove or through the window; but hesitated, then raised it to the light. The countenance of the man underwent a lightning change. First it was anger, then surprise, and now it was curiosity! Wildly he regarded it with open mouth and bulging eyes, as if it were the touchstone of eternal youth and beauty from the Celestial Realms.

There is something inexplicably attractive about the first sight of virgin gold. Moreover, there is an irresistability about it that is positively compelling. More especially is this true when viewed in large, bulky lumps, and this one weighed a full pound.

During the Klondike rush of '98, he had read in the *Gopher Hole* how that men had gone mad at sight of gold; and now here it was, the very stuff! And Page had scraped it up in handfuls! Also, he knew, in a vague way, that pure gold was worth about twenty dollars an ounce and if this lump weighed a pound—and there was no mistake on that point—then, “sixteen times twenty bein’ three hundred and twenty, thet air homely hunk o’ rubbish’s wurth mor’n my caow and hoss put together, and all the herd’s-grass in the barn to boot,” he mathematized. It was soft and leaden and he could mark it easily with his thumb nail.

“Jist so much metal,” he said positively, “a part of the earth’s composition and clean ‘nough until made into money and stamped by the government, and then it’s rank pizen and cussed forever and eternal.” The next moment it had gone to join the rawhide thong in the bottom of the old clock. Seizing his hat the agitated farmer bolted out of doors and went about his neglected duties.

But Leland Tannerhill had little appetite for work. His brain was in a whirl, and he found himself going hurridly about the farm from one thing to another, commencing a dozen jobs and completing none. Finally, he gave it up and returned to the house.

"It's no use," he reasoned, "I'm all up-sot, and my nerves has clean got the better o' me. If suthin' ain't done I'll be out of my head and over the bay afore Jason gits here." Half an hour later saw him on the road to Ashworth, holding in on as handsome a four-year-old as ever pawed tan-bark.

Leland was no sport. Neither was he vain; but if ever child loved red candy, he loved to sit behind a good horse and he was never known to be without one of the best. He loved fine animals for the pure love of them; and, as he often said, "It costs no more to feed a good horse than a scrub, so why should a man be satisfied with slabs when there's plenty of good clean timber?"

At The Bridge he halted long enough to read a notice a fellow with a red button on his coat was tacking up on Nate Whitten's horse shed, then went sailing around Little Squam and past the Qusump Mills, Black Raven scarcely touching the ground, his glossy black coat flaked with foam. Once

in the village, he drove straight to the Holiness Tavern, the only hostelry in the place, and was met at the door by "Landy" Cotton the genial and prosperous proprietor. He threw the reins over the dashboard, and in stepping from the buggy was jerked off his feet by the fidgeting colt who had taken fright at Rec Cotton's sputtering auto. Leland was unhurt, however, and the frightened animal was soon quieted by Carl Huckins, after Charlie the parrot had sung out "Whoa," from his cage under the porch.

Leland little dreamed of what his impromptu visit to Ashworth that sunny September afternoon portended. It was destined to mark an epoch in his lonely life, an epoch of unfoldment from the empty husks of his saharian isolation to the oasian dream of human brotherhood, only to be dashed to destruction at the very moment when life would seem worth the living! Had he possessed more adequate means of social and intellectual intercourse, the events that were staged for the near future must have been an open book to him and the disaster averted. As it was, he had never seen a Socialist paper. The pity of it! More the pity—aye, the shame of it—he had never met a Socialist, and none of the comrades had ever called on him! He had never heard the blessed message of Socialism's grand mission of human justice

explained. He had been shunned and left alone in his ignorance and sorrows to nurse and nourish them, pining away the empty years without hope, and with only his inherited prejudices, superstitions and fears, while those who might have saved him and added his honest support to their ranks, had not yet learned the wisdom of classified propaganda. When finally the truth broke through to him, it came with a suddenness that blinded him and plunged him headlong on to the reef of self-abnegation.

As he fell from his carriage he did not notice the skulking hulk of the rat-eyed lawyer Jibbs in company with the editor of the *Aberrant*, as they reeled around the corner from an alley dive in the rear of the house. Had he known what devilish doings the rum-soaked maggots of their degenerate brains were scheming for the coming night, Leland Tannerhill might well have hesitated ere he accepted Cotton's invitation to remain over for the lecture.

"I don't know what benefit it's goin' to be to me if I do stay and hear the lies them politicians tell. I hern 'em for forty year, and a body can tell beforehand jist what they are comin' at." He had replied to Cotton's coaxing.

"What do you know about Socialism, anyway?" bluntly blurted out a member of the local committee on arrangements.

"Wal, I hain't heard much about it,"

truthfully apologized the other, "but if what the papers says is true, I guess I've hearn about all I care to of them air critters that wants to get 'lected ter office, no marter which party they belong to. They're all alike, purty much, same's the Frenchman's kittens."

"How's that?"

"'You put it all in ze bag, you shake him all up, ze first one come it out, all ze rest jes ze same.'" At this point Ross Sanborn and Dr. Sweeney came into the office, and in reply to a suggestion from Cotton that possibly *this* party—the Socialist party—might be different, Leland ranted on, to the effect that, once elected, they have no further use for working people until election day rolls around again, and added, hotly: "I tell ye it ain't no use talkin', them air rich bucks has got everything fit ter own, and a poor man is friz out these days. Friz out, I say. And the dimmer-crats and the republicans, and the pro'bitionists, Socialists and what all, are six o' one and half a dozen o' tother. The whole tormented parcel on 'em is rottern'n To-phet! The country is gone clean ter the dogs and they ain't no hope for nobody that has to work for a livin'. There'll be another war, soon, and it'll be right ter hum here I'm afeared. God pity them air pus-guts that corners all the grain and cotton and sich that we have to live on, when the

honest folks thet digs it all out o' the sile gets their eyes open to the mischief. I, fer one, will never shoulder a gun, 'less they come where I be; but, then, I'm one of them fools thet ain't in favor of spillin' human blood, ye see."

"My dear sir, you're a Socialist and don't know it! Come up to the meeting tonight, and if I fail to convince you of the fact, I promise you I will leave the lecture field and start a popcorn stand or open a Chinese laundry on a desert isle," put in a tall, fine-looking stranger with a bronzed skin and wearing a wide-brimmed Stetson. "Mr. Tannerhill, shake hands with Mr. Stanley Lark, of Texas. This is the gentleman who speaks tonight in the Town Hall. Pardon me for neglecting to make you acquainted, and now you will excuse me, for I have to meet the train from Boston." Thus volunteered the affable host by way of rescuing the situation.

"So you're frum Texas, be ye, one o' them wild and wooly Westerners? Well I swaw! Say, you don't look 'ziff you had any horns growin' out of your head, and I hope I hain't 'fended nobody for I meant well enough, and jist to show you, my friend, thet we ain't a lot o' barbarians here in the weakkneed East, come with me for a sort drive this afternoon," invited the hermit of Tannerhill Hill. "I've got to go hum," he resumed, "and put up the

caow and milk afore that spoutin' o' yourn begins, for I want you to understand that I have got the best caow in Carroll county, and she hain't laid out a night since I owned her. If you're from Texas, you know enough to know that it spiles 'em and dries 'em up to go without bein' milked." And without giving his new-found friend time to either accept or protest, he called to Rec Cotton: "Here, Rec, harness up the Raven and fetch him around. I'm going to give this 'ere long-horn a balloon full of good old New Hampshire air that ain't mixed all up with soft coal smoke and sewer-gas."

Ordinarily Leland was a man of reticence and solemnity; but, somehow, he seemed to warm up to this sweet-toned son of the plains, with his thrilling handshake and his wholesome, genuine smile.

Five minutes later they were fairly flying along toward Raven Roost mansion at a three-minute clip, the big Texan truly admiring the clean-limbed black stallion reeling off the miles through the changing scenery of the mountain road. Leland, companion-hungry and therefore susceptible, readily unbosomed to him the pain of all his sad story; and ere the great gate at the foot of the lane swung open to admit them to the Raven Roost mansion, the two big-hearted boys-grown-up had become firm friends, aye, comrades; in a friendship and comradeship such as Leland had not known since the days of Erma and Jason.

Stanley Lark has a way of walking right up to the door and into the hearts of men; and when those two big children of God's perfoumed acres started for the lower field to visit the potato patch, they were keeping step side by side, Stanley's long arm across Leland's shoulder—an irresistible demonstration of the great love and comradeship that dwells in the hearts of god-men such as these, who live above the fog, where the soul-habitations of real humanity welcomes man above the dollar.

They looked over the farm, looked at the pigs, at the chickens and the flowers, and after cooling their lips from a spilling oaken bucket at the old well, Leland opened the shutters and they entered the front room.

Over the organ in the west corner of the spacious parlor with its old-fashioned fireplace and antique furnishings, hung a large crayon portrait. In front of this the visitor paused, looked inquiringly at his host, then turned without speaking and gazed at it long and silently.

"Thet's Her, there was only two on us, and it seems she had to go. I s'pose it was God's will, and I hadn't ought to complain; but some way I hain't never been quite able ter f'give the old folks for the part they played in her takin' off. Mother was all sot on her havin' that white-livered young buzzard of old 'Muskrat' Perry's. Said he'd make a good 'catch!' Mebbe he

would, fur's his devilish gold went, but ruther'n ter see poor Sis have ter have him ter put up with, and ter be motherin' children by sich vermin as he, I'd sooner she'd be dead, if I'm punished ferever in Hell-fire and brimstone fer sayin' it!"

The other made no sign that he had heard, vouchsafing no reply, and the bereaved brother continued: "Thet's her organ. Jason worked in Featherick and Berth's mill at Ashworth fer a dollar and ten cents a day and bought it and give it to her 'fore they was married on the sly. She took it wonderful, and larnt in no time so she could play like she was gifted. And then they turned agin Jason and it killed her. Oh! Erm, poor Erm!"

Atremble and weeping, the last of the Tannerhills turned and looked out over the valley to a little hill where the white stones glistened in the sunlight a mile away. Up to this point the entranced visitor had not spoken; but here, and without taking his eyes from the lovely face that smiled down at him from the canvas on the wall, he exclaimed aesthetically: "My God! My God! what a beautiful woman, *what a beautiful woman!* And you tell me her parents separated her from her natural mate! No wonder it killed her. She was too sensuous —too much alive." And under his breath he said more that his host did not hear!

"Yes, she sartin was above the average in good looks. So was he; and to see them

air two together was worth a body's while, knowin' as how they thought so much of one another and seemed so well in every way and strong."

"It is a pity! A sad and crying pity!" solemnly declared the big Texan. Then seated himself at the organ and laid hands on the tarnished ivory keys.

Leland drew up a chair and was silent.

Softly at first, then in drowning billows the mellow music rose and fell, rolled and trilled and subsided, rose and rolled again to the magic touch of the inspired player, as out from his great soul in mighty requiem poured a flood-tide of Mozartian sorrows—sorrows, tears, and joys.

From the mad horrors of a midnight dream of the martyred Poe, rolled back the black thunder-clouds of misery to the happy laughter of little children waking to the gladsome reveille in man's Pierian Dawn. Next an opera from Wagner. Then an Italian serenade. Now a sweet baby lullaby. Finally, far out of the long forgotten lyric-lore of the yesterday of youth, he called up the tender notes of an old love tune. On, and on, over the keys the trained fingers flew, mingling all the pent-up emotions of the human heart with the Eolian strains of the Astral Realm, as if held to the sweet cadence by Euterpe's seraph hand. Leland, his hoary head bowed upon his hands, the sunlight streaming in golden flood down upon his snow-white

locks, moaned and sobbed as the silvery notes poured a torrent of medleyed woe and bliss, sorrow and joy, hope and promise, into the empty gulf of his silent past. And when at last he could stand it no longer, he fell on his knees and passionately importuned High Heaven in silent prayer!

The music stopped. Both men bowed heads in silence. Then laying a hand on the troubled brow, the Texan said: "Come! Come, Comrade! We have lived long enough in the dead, and dusty past. Your dear sister is dead—was murdered. She was murdered, I say! *Murdered in cold blood!* but not by her people as you think I am charging. I will tell you all about it later. Come, I know it all! Listen! I am going to sing you a song."

With a shivering shock the old organ burst into life anew. Came then the voice of the singer, a clear baritone, sonorous with cultured excellence and full of yearning and appeal. He sang a song of toil, of the tramp, tramp, tramp of weary feet. "March on! March on!" Who has not heard it? Who has not felt the hot blood surge and rage in fiery sympathy at the sound of it? The singer was now at the zenith of his physical and musical efficiency. The old organ rocked and pitched to the terrific strength of the storming player, as he swayed and reeled under the scorching fury of his own vol-

canic will. The purple veins stood out on his neck and forehead like huge welts, as the impassioned harmony pleaded for the rights of men in Labor's righteous cause. It seemed that all the world-old wrongs of Mammon's riot rule were centered in that grand rebellion.

It was the voice of the slave crying up from the abyss of fettered centuries for justice that had never come! It was the weeping wail of the widowed wife and the orphaned child, mingled with the brutal din of the bloody battlefield. It was the reverberating voice of defiance from the torture-chamber and the burning stake. It was the bitter story of the empty sleeve and the empty lives of the myriads of disinherited poor. And finally, it was the blessed promise, coupled with the heroic challenge of the workers of the world; and at the words: "Liberty or death!" Leland Tannerhill leaped to his feet, eyes aflame, his white hair shaking to the tremble of his massive head! The man was wild—beside himself with emotion! In fact, he was, like the musician and the music, clearly mad! Mad and transported back over the gruesome path of man's inhumanity to his fellow-man. Mad with a madness born of the wrongs of the tyrant reign of graft and gold and greed! Mad with the madness for love, for life, and for home! Mad with the desert-thirst of long hungry years of loneli-

ness and burning drouth! And hysterically, joyously mad, because of the letters of Jason, and for his new found friend with his great optimism and his irrefutable philosophy of life.

The music and the singer ceased as abruptly as if suddenly shot out of the world. The Texan rose to his feet, and seizing the agitated mountaineer affectionately by the arm strode with him out of the room.

“Don’t! Don’t, Comrade!” he said. “You must not be unnerved. If you knew what I know, you would be happier, even in the midst of your sorrows, than those vampire capitalists down there on that smooth water in their handsome yachts, and with their private ownership in other men’s lives. There is a great future for us. I will tell you all about it tonight when I tell it to those poor devils who are grinding out their lives in the woolen and cotton slave pens of Ashworth.”

Leland gazed down at the great sheen of silvery water, speckled with its emerald islands and tiny crafts. “Tell me—Mr.—Comrade Lark, what that was you sung ter me? O Lord, O Lord! I never heard the like, and it jist sort o’ overcome me, entire.”

“‘The Marseillaise.’ France’s national hymn, and the international battle-song of Labor. It is very popular with the Socialists, and is pretty generally conceded by

everybody to be the most inspiring piece of music ever written."

"Socialists is purty much all poor folks, ain't they, Texas?" (Leland was himself again.) The Texan grinned, but not at the interrogation, and his host continued: "I've hearn as much, and if they be, I'm for 'em more o'r less anyway. Give me my kick at the top dog every time, 'specially when he's big agin as the one down. And now you come with me, I've suthin to show you." Whereupon he led the way into the kitchen and straight to the old clock. Opening the door at the bottom, he ran his arm down, clawed around a moment, and brought out the nugget and flung it down heavily on the table. The Texan seized it, looked it over sharply and exclaimed: "Gold!"

"There ye go, 'gold!' that's the name on't, and where that come frum they say a body can scrape it up in gobs. Read that air letter." Here he handed the other Ben Page's letter from Alaska, and when he had read it he sat back in his chair and meditated thoughtfully.

"What will you do, Comrade?" he said finally. "I ought ter write, I s'pose, and say suthin 'bout gettin' that stuff from Page, and tell him what he ought ter do with the mine; but I hate ter undertake it, I'm a poor hand at penmanship, and a letter I hain't hed ter arnswer fer no knowin'

when. Don't you want to do the job for me, bein's how you're right here, and know all the circumstances and probably more used ter thet sort o' thing than I be?"

Stanley replied that he would be very glad to be of service in the matter, and after a few suggestions from Leland proceeded to write the following letter:

"Raven Roost R. F. D. No. 2,
"Holiness, N. H., Sept. 10, 1910.

"Mr Benjamin Page,
"Broken Bone Mine,
"High Heath, Alaska.

"Dear Sir:—

"The two packages from you and my old friend, Jason Sands, came safely to hand, and please accept my thanks for your prompt action and deep interest, as manifested, and for your devotion to Jason and his interests.

"Jason has not yet reached this place. I shall look for him from now on with great anxiety, but have no doubt that ere this reaches you he will have arrived safely home; in which event you shall be notified immediately.

"As to the mine, I would say, hold on to it until further communications from here, providing you can endure the hardship; but in case of your inability to do this, I would suggest that you make an effort to realize on it as handsomely as possible, and then come right here, where you will,

in all probability find Jason awaiting you.

“However, use your own judgment in the matter, as I have every confidence that, being on the ground, such judgment would be more sane and efficient than any I could possibly render from this point.

“Trusting all will come out right in the end, and with best wishes, I remain,

“Yours very truly,

“LELAND B. TANNERHILL.”

“He’ll get that about next year at this time, if the letter don’t git wore out afore it gits to him, and if he ain’t eat up by wolves fust,” said Leland, “and now if you’ll come and hold the light while I skim a couple o’ pans of milk fer the pigs, I’ll show you milk that is milk, the kind that grows on a real caow and not related ter the brand they pump out o’ the Mississippi sewer, ‘cording ter the tell of them that’s been there.” Here Leland led the way to a big, airy cellar, cool and clean.

In one corner, all bricked off and cemented, with long rows of shelves filled with old-fashioned earthen pans, was the milk-room. “Them four on the top shelf was sot this mornin’, and these ‘ere six b’low is last night’s milk; we won’t tech any o’ that air, but these ‘ere bottom ones is thirty-six hours old comin’ six o’clock tonight, and if it ain’t sour—(trying it on his finger) and it ain’t, I’ll show you suthin that, if you Texas folks can beat it, I’ll sell

out and buy a jint o' thet Pan-handle alkiliar country o' yourn, and go to raisin' post holes and revolution seeds along with the rest o' you red-flaggers." Whereupon he ran a case-knife around the edge of the pan freeing the cream from it, flopped the edges into the middle then lifted the whole mass of thick, yellow stuff on the case-knife and carried it across the room to a large-mouthed stone jar and dropped it in.

"How's thet, Texas?" he challenged, "and jist ter show thet thet air ain't nothin' extra, what d'yer think er this 'ere?" As he spoke he lifted a pan of the "last night's" setting from the shelf, placed it on the cellar bottom, and taking an egg from the basket under the butter table, held it to the full height of his long reach above his head and let it fall, spat, into the middle of the pan. It simply made a dent, but did not go through the cream. Taking another pan from the bottom row, he ran the knife around the edge, threw down the knife, and deliberately seizing it with thumb and fingers in the center, lifted the half-inch of leathery matter intact from the blue milk underneath and deposited it with the first in the stone jar.

"The only thing I have to say, is, that I'd like to own the cow that gave that milk," decisively and emphatically declared his enthusiastic visitor, "and she is worth five hundred dollars with the wink of an

eye, or I'm a maverick. Where did you get such a critter, Comrade, and what breed is she?"

"Gutter off old Sam Massey thet lived yender there on the Langdon place by thet big willer tree," replied the owner, as they emerged from the rollway with the blue milk for the pigs. "She's one o' two twins he rize from a Black Dutch heifer calf, gi'n him, so he used to tell, by a rich woman in Boston when he was in the oyster business there. Imported from Germany, so she told him, and the twins was half Black Dutch and half Jersey. Sam was allus a great hand ter brag about what little he hed, and one night I happened in there when he was duin' the chores, and he showed me the tricks I jist showed you, and run on about the breed until I offered ter trade him old 'Charlie'—thet was a hoss I owned at thet time—and a bran new side-hill plow ter boot. He took me up, and I got the caow. She'll be ten year old come another spring, if he knowed what he was talkin' about and didn't lie. And she'il stay with me a while longer yit, and I guess you won't blame me fer wantin' ter hang on ter her, when you see the mess she gives when we milk her tonight."

Nor did the Texan blame him for his fancy of the fine old "Bess," when, at milking time, he sat on a stone in the barn-yard, and saw Leland draw a brimming ten-

quart pail of milk from her. And when, ten minutes later, they were in the milk-room, each drinking a full quart of the pure rich lactage food, he marveled no more at the rugged healthy glow of his big companion.

“I allus set here and drink my drink o’ milk, warm from the caow,” he explained, “and half the time that’s all I eat fer a meal. My ’pinion is folks eats tue much stuff that ain’t good fer ’em, ’specially meat and sich like. And in the cities I’ve hear’n they ’dulterate the milk and pizen it ter keep it from sourin’; is that so, Comrade Lark?” Stanley replies that the charge was far from being a slander, and added: “That gives me an idea. Comrade Tannerhill, and I propose to make a point on that city milk question in the course of my remark tonight. Millions of babies are either poisoned with improper foods, or else die from starvation for lack of proper and adequate nourishment every year in the big cities of this country, and in the face of ample and numerous so-called pure food laws.”

“Why don’t they take ’em to the country where there’s plenty of—”

“Pure milk, pure air, pure water, and peace and quite and health?” interrupted the Texan. The other looked mystified, and Lark continued: “I’ll tell you why a poor widow with several small children, working

for three dollars a week in a garret sweat-shop cannot do it. I will tell you why the family whose head is blistering his naked pelt over molten metal in the steel mills for nine dollars a week, paying gas and water privileges five times in excess of their real value, paying a fat landlord two rents for half a shelter unfit to kennel a decent dog in, paying the ever-growing high prices for food—adulterated at that—and coal, and shoddy clothing cannot do it. I will tell you why the young couple with a fairly decent salary—”

“Stop, stop! I’ve hear’n enough!” interrupted the other, “I was to Boston once, a good many years ago, and things looked bad enough to me then. I guess they’re wus now. God help ’em. I tell ye they’re lost! All I can think on is another rebellion, or suthin’ but I hope I’ll be gone afore it gets here. It’s beyend me, I swaw!”

“I don’t guess it will be merely a rebellion, Comrade, it will be a *revolution*,” sweetly corrected the Texas giant, his hand on the other’s shoulder, and with eyes ablur with emotion. “Not a rebellion, but a *Revolution!* A peaceful, and bloodless *Revolution.*”

“I tell ye it’s beyend me; but if you fellers has got the remedy I’ll jine hands with ye and do my part, and that’s all the best on us can promise.” The discussion thus ended, and as the hour for supper

was approaching, with eight miles to drive back to town to hear his first Socialist lecture, Leland hitched up Black Raven, and with the golden purple glory of the autumn verdure painted on the forest hillsides, a divine splendor in the velvet twilight, the two men rode together in silent admiration and the drive was all too short.

Upon entering the buggy the Yankee passed the reins over to his Southern friend, and when at the end of thirty minutes' driving they were seated in the dining room of the Holiness Tavern, the plainsman said: "That colt of yours has a future, Comrade, if you want to get it out of him. He's fast, brainy, and easy on the bit. Has he a record?"

"You bet he has, and a good record at that. He's done all my plowin' and hauled all the hay, and done the other farm work since he was two yearold. Hain't never been hurt in the mouth, and was never struck a blow. He don't know a whip from a clothesline. That's the way he's been brought up. Yes, he's blooded, though, a son of old General Lion, and Scott Rogers says he'd make a trotter."

"He is certainly a fine animal, and advertises his early training in his every movement. Early training, you know, is everything with animals, as with men, Comrade Tannerhill. The love of things that are real is bred on the farm, mark that. I am

glad that I met you, for you are an idealist."

As the hour approached for the lecture, the hotel office began to fill up with the town boys and nearby farmers. Ed Horrigan and Babe Merchant started a hot discussion over baseball, and were joined immediately by barber Brooks and Fred Brown. Leland and his companion seated themselves at a small table and commenced a game of checkers, the interest in which terminated the baseball question, and the affable Texan saw to it that there were no dull drags for lack of good story-telling. When the hour arrived for the doors to open for the speech, they all marched to the Town Hall, Rec Cotton and Will Huckins in the lead, with Mina Blake, the "hen" man, Harry Porter and Frank Hughes plying questions thick and fast to the Texan as they walked together under the rising autumn moon. When the hall was reached Leland was invited to a seat by the side of the speaker on the stage, and after a brief introduction by the local secretary, Jennie Drew, the stranger from the Southwest walked forward to the footlights and began to speak.

CHAPTER V.

THE SON OF JASON SANDS.

Stood one like the Roman soldier
With ashes in his hair;
Radiant—buoyant the other,
With his sun-kissed locks and fair.

'Twere frost and the summer sunshine—
The vernal and the sear;
The song of the beryl springtime—
The dirge of the dying year.

The *Aurora* was in the hands of robbers! Aye, worse than robbers; they were desperate men—yeggmen were they! The mining of gold was not their profession. They were disciples of the philosophy of death. There were six of them, the six who came aboard at Fort Yukon. They had planned the robbery well, timing it to come off at dusk, and near the north bank in shallow water. Taking advantage of their opportunity when all hands were huddled aft on the starboard quarter, and while the Socialists were vying with one another to the delight of all, they had slipped forward, one-by-one, to consummate their diabolical plot.

Gold they had come for—the gold that was shipped aboard at the Fort. The lives of men were scant consideration and not to be reckoned in save as a menace. They had brought “*sop*,” and the boat was to be run on a sandbar and blown up as she struck. This would cause a panic and add to the general confusion, and the killing would be easier and less cold-blooded. At least, it would have that appearance.

They were in the North country for the same purpose that other men were there; for the same purpose that Jason Sands, the Mexican, Toy, Jack Philips, and the rest were there; they were there for *gold*. It was an individual, free-for-all scramble, without order, without system, without organization and without principle. To win meant life, and the luxuries of life; but to lose meant starvation, frost and death. In early life they had begun the competitive strife in earnest and with honesty of purpose. They had failed. They had been victims of the dishonest, and now they resolved to become the victors.

The initial opening of the drama of death, was the killing of Capt. Anderson in the wheel-house and the placing of one of the gang at the helm. This was accomplished without commotion, as was the coralling of the crew in the engine room, where they were held at pistol’s point while the old tub was being run aground, when,

unarmed as they were, they could be easily shot in the general mixup of the wreck. Luck favored them, it would seem, up to the point where Toy ran forward and entered the pilot-house where she expected to find Captain Anderson, and did—a dead man!

It was an inopportune moment. The wires had been strung and the sack of explosive lowered in place over the bow by two of the gang when the job was bungled. The man at the battery had just received orders from "Bluebeard," the leader, not to open the current until she struck, unless in case of discovery, when at the first alarm he was to "touch her off" without warning. Quick as the agile Indian had been seized by the brute in the pilot-house, she had been quicker; and as he thrust her over the rail her right hand flashed out, then came the scream and the explosion. The two men at the bow were blown to atoms, Toy thrown overboard, and the robber who had thrown her overboard had sheathed the slender blade of her poniard in his cruel heart.

With the killing of Capt. Anderson, this made five persons dead, and only three of the six desperadoes left to deal with. The nose of the ship was on the bar, everything was confusion aboard, and then the firing began!

When the passengers fell in a heap from the shock of the explosion, it was just at the parting of day and the beginning of night. It was not dark, but the murk of approaching darkness lowering gloomily over the river, palled misshapen shadows through the uneven landscape, like the prowling ghosts of graveyard lore that nightmare through our dreams, as we roam again with the hairy men of yesterday in the mystic caverns of our slumber horror-lands.

The doctor was the first to his feet quickly followed by Jack Philips in a mad rush for the pilot-house whence had come the shriek of Toy, when, almost instantly and without warning, a strange, great light came over the land. Far to the northwest a giant pillar of white fire streamed straight up into the heavens, then at a point that seemed hundreds of miles from earth, shot down a shaft of the same white fire from the very summit on an angle of 45 degrees to the earth. It was a marvelous sight and one never to be forgotten. It was so instantaneous and unearthly that all on board were blinded—temporarily—so white with daylight had everything become. It was pure daylight—no! that don't express it. Whiter than daylight; that's it. It was whiter than the whitest thing in the world. If daylight is white light, this light was whiter than all the daylight that had ever been in all the ages of the world rolled

into one day. Nothing like it had *ever* been; and it came and rested on the wreck in the river and the whole country for miles around was lighted with its unearthly brilliancy. At sight of it there was a lull in the carnival of destruction; but it was only for a moment, and then the slaughter was resumed.

The three pirates still living unapprised of the fate of their mates, rushed among the unarmed passengers firing off their pistols, spreading death and terror in their wake and sparing none; but their reign was destined to be of short duration. With the coming of the new strange light was revealed the secret of the supposed accident. The truth was not recognized immediately by all, but Jason Sands knew. And when the Mexican, Spanto, who had rushed after his young bride at her cry of distress drew her tiny dagger from the breast of the villain who had drowned her, he, also, knew. Jack Philips was made to realize it a moment later when he looked down the barrel of an eighteen-inch Colt. It was Jason Sands who saved his life. Jason had seen the movement and interpreted its meaning in the eye of the black-bearded hercules just as the smoking revolver left the level of its latest victim's heart. That was enough for Jason. He did something. Though with only one leg and both his crutches lost in the melee, he sprang a full

six feet and drove his huge right fist half-way to the elbow into the thick chest of the bearded devil just as he pulled the trigger. There was a crunch of bones, a loud report, and then a splash in the river thirty feet distant on the port quarter.

Jason fell on his face against the ship's rail from his own momentum, but was quickly up again. Jack Philips was staggering from the shot that plowed a furrow from brow to crown through the scalp and just grazing the skull. He was drenched in blood, a thin stream still cataracting down over his face, he presented the appearance of having been struck between the eyes with a huge cleaver. On the deck lay the doctor, face downward. The two remaining assassins, their guns clubbed, were maneuvering to brain the optimistic Jack, when, of a sudden, his whole demeanor changed. There was a flash of the arms, the two robbers dropped their guns and crumpled up limp with eyes and tongues protruding as the powerful fingers of Jack's calloused hands sunk deep into their throats. The fight was over. When their faces purpled he let go of them, and they clattered down on the deck among the victims of their frightful butchery. This completed the last act in the unspeakable tragedy. With hands clutching at his bloody forehead, his face blanched with ashen pallor, the big, soft-hearted boy-man

who had obeyed the Great Law at last and fought for his life, pitched forward and fell at full length topmost of the heap of dead!

Among all the erstwhile peaceful company but one remained standing. Jason, it was, and he felt a great sickness coming over him. He was weak and faint; for, had he not killed a man? He had hoped never to be guilty of such as this. That he had done it in self-defense, and in defense of his comrade's life were no apology. "I have killed a man," he cried aloud, "and he is down there in the water with poor Toy." Then he contemplated the bloody havoc of the evening with thoughts that may not be told of human tongue!

The blood stood in jelly-like pools around the dead. The deck was a shambles,—shambles is no name for it. It was a saturnalian murder fest! But the radiant angular light through the gathering darkness persisted, looking down in a soft, silent flood like the tail of a comet roosting high up on a column of pure radium.

There was a movement at the base of the pyre of mangled humanity, and Jason leaped to the spot and was bending over the doctor, when a great hissing noise got in his ears—a sound like escaping steam. Before he could turn round it was overhead, and as he looked his eyes met the blinding glare of a winged meteor, huge

and white, and as hot as it was white. It stopped immediately above the wreck and beat its bat-like wings against the air like some antediluvian monster poised to dive for its living prey. Then the white light and heat went out, and in the ray of the other light he could make out a gigantic bird of metal. There it hung, flapping its terrible wings, its long, slim body stationary as if depended by an invisible cable from above.

At this point a powerful voice sang out as with authority. A long, door-like plate on the underside of the monster which looked like the chutes coal teams carry opened, and a man in black tights slid down the chute and into the river. Then the iron bird fell back a few yards down stream with the current and hovered nearer the water. From the opening in the belly a rope was lowered, just as the man in the black tights came to the surface bearing a heavy burden in his arms. It could be seen that he wore a heavy belt and that the rope had a bright hook dangling at the end. But the man fastened the hook in the belt of the body he bore, then sank back into the water again. Up the body was jerked, and Jason could see it was that of the black-bearded hercules he had knocked overboard. Again the rope dropped, still farther down stream fell the winged monster, and again the man in the black tights

came up. This time he also had a burden but it was not so big, and around the shapely figure clung the wet, feminine attire of the pretty Indian bride. Up the diver was jerked, the dripping bundle in his arms; then the mysterious thing of the air came and stood by the side of the wreck. At this point, to Jason, the world faded into space; everything got black, and he knew no more.

One hour later, Jason Sands, Jack Philips and Juarez Spanto slid down the chute of the *Comet* to the life-net of the *Agitator* anchored in Norton Sound, five hundred miles away.

Jason opened his eyes for the first time since his collapse on the *Aurora*. He was lying on thistle-down! He knew it was thistle-down, for he could sense the furry fibers tickling his cheek and the giant thistle upon which he rested was nodding gently in the breezes and the morning sunshine! As further proof that he was in fairyland, he toyed with the elusive stuff which porridged through his fingers like soap lather on his shaving brush. He was in a strange and wonderful place; he knew that, for out of the heavens glowed a blended, garnet-emerald light that seemed to be the very walls of his new world. At first he thought he was dead and that his spirit was being wafted among the planets and into Paradise. He was lying in a hospital hammock

on the *Agitator*, the most wonderful ship ever conceived in the fertile brain of man.

For some moments the puzzled man lay still on his back and stared at the strange liquid glow that came from nowhere and yet from everywhere. He dared not move or speak for fear of waking up to find it all a dream. But men were speaking. He could hear voices, and such voices he had never heard before. They were surely the voices of men, and in that they were merely human voices was not the marvel; but that there was a quality of tone about their manner of speech belonging not to human tongue. They were the voices of men, he knew that, but never of mere earth-men! Mellow, they were, and musically sweet, like the tuned reeds of some perfect musical instrument muted with a mute of silver. Jason moved his hands just to make sure he really lived, and a voice at his pillow—a voice that had all the elements of a suppressed laugh in it—called out, encouragingly, “Professor, this comrade will live.”

“Of course he will live, Captain,” came the positive rejoinder. Then Jason felt a hand grip his own, and raising his eyes he beheld, though indistinctly, a tall, handsome youth of perhaps twenty, smiling down at him from eyes that were wide apart and full of warmth and love.

“Where am I?” queried the perplexed

Jason. "I am not a sick man, what does it all mean?"

"It means that you and your comrades have had a very tight squeeze, and that you are now safe among comrades and friends; and if you will wait and rest I will tell you all about it. And now, here is a drink of cold water. Take this, and then we will all turn in and have a good night's sleep."

Jason looked at the young man at his side and wanted to protest and insist that there was nothing really serious the matter with him; but there was something in the manner and voice of the frank, calm boy that forbade the rebellion. Besides, there was the goblet of sparkling cold water, and he wanted it.

The heavy head sank back on its pillow. The youth touched a button in the wall, and softly the tinted glow melted away through a mellow twilight and into a sky of inky blackness. Almost simultaneously with the fading of the tinted light there came over him a sense of sweetest rest such as he had never known in all his life before. The quiet was so intense as to produce a psychic musical harmony of the inert molecules of the very ethrical silence. He knew he could hear the music, but it was so infinitely delicate and fine that with abated breath and ears straining he was barely able to sense it. It was like water dropping among musical combs far on the

mountain side. Or was it seraph hands playing some heavenly authem on musical glasses of rarest crystal? It came into his ears at times like the fuzzy tones of the horse hair reeds he used to fix between the window sashes when a boy, and that no one could account for save himself. Then it would tinkle merrily for a space, like midget gnomes dancing their fantastic pirouettes in tiptoe twirls along fiddle-strings. And finally, it rippled away into space like the silvery waters of a peaceful woodland lake, nimbly nibbling along the pebbly shores of its wild abode. All the world was in tune. He smiled happily as he contemplated it; then he closed his eyes and invited sleep.

At daybreak next morning, Jason awoke to find himself swinging gently in a bed hanging from above. The ship was rolling lazily to the even swell of the green waters of Behring Sea. Dimly he could hear the breaking billows spraying on the rugged shores of the Sound. Also, the wild, ricketting notes of sea-birds reached his ears, mingled with the voices of men on the strange ship. He rocked his head, and from either side of the space he rested in he could look far out through the fine meshes of screens that seemed made of white silk thread, and he could see the vast expanse of ocean as the ship rose and fell with the rising and falling of each rolling

wave. He was practically out of doors. But there was no uncomfortable chill in the air, though he knew the degree of temperature out there must be low. Moreover, the air that came to him through the white silk screens was deliciously blent with the salten odors of the sea, odors such as only those who fare the mighty ocean know. He felt no pain, but was conscious of a great hunger; and in reply to a jovial "Good morning, Comrade," that came from somewhere in that same laugh-suppressing voice he had heard in the evening, he sat bolt upright and replied: "I don't know who you are, nor where I am; but I'm hungrier than a graven image."

"My name is Hautier, Comrade, and you are on board the *Agitator*, a ship belonging to the Socialist party, which party is the political expression of the great International Co-operative Democracy, or International Socialist party. I am the captain of this ship, and of course, I am a Socialist. We are comrades. You shall know more of us for we are cruising the world in the interest of the new science and I learn from the professor that you are to accompany us if you so desire. And now you may prepare for breakfast, for I understand you slept well through the night and that you are able to go on deck."

With this the captain touched a red spot on the wall and the swinging bed sank until

it rested on the floor. Ten minutes later Jason Sands was on the open deck where he found the doctor and Jack Philips had preceded him.

Captain Hautier, a stocky blonde Frenchman and the son of a Communard, was speaking, while Jack and the Aztec appeared fairly beside themselves with excitement.

“No, no, they are alive I tell you,” the captain was saying. And Jack was protesting: “But he killed him I tell *you*, and I choked two of them to death!” At the same time the doctor was almost screeching: “They drowned her, sir; did they not throw her overboard?”

Speechless, Jason rushed forward to learn that the Aztec’s young bride was alive, that the two men Jack had strangled were alive, and that the robber chief he had knocked overboard was alive and were all on board and doing as well as could be expected under the circumstances!

It was no easy task to quiet the joy-crazed Spanto. He wanted to be rushed at once to the bedside of his young wife; for was he not a physician? But the captain persuaded him that it would be best to wait. The child was sleeping, he told him, and besides, she was very low, life hanging by a mere thread which any sudden excitement might be the means of snapping.

“Listen here,” he said, “and I will try

to make it all clear—but wait! here comes Symbols to tell us breakfast is waiting below.” (Symbols was the Japanese cabin boy, whose right name was Yama Yama. Captain Hautier had nicknamed him “Symbols” because the silk costumes he always wore were embroidered with green dragons.) The little Jap led the way to the long mess-room, his baggy pajama trousers fluttering around his bare ankles like spitsheets in a hurricane.

Introductions and handshakes were the order of the moment and they were both abundant and generous. There were glad-some greetings from twenty robust sailor lads garbed in white linen, who grinned like happy children when Captain Hautier promised Jason Sands the surprise of his life when the professor should appear. With this, Symbols whirled and shot through the door, to plunge headlong into the young scientist who caught him up and spanked him playfully as he entered the mess-room. Swiftly the lithe figure of the rose-cheeked prodigy glided forward to the long table, the entire ship’s company saluting him in chorus with: “Good morning, Comrade Sands.” The almost feminine features flushed with the glow of perfect health and rampant vigor, and the clear eyes sparkled childishly as he bent a rapid succession of responsive smiles on all, and in a voice vibrant with virility and cultured

excellence he greeted them with cordial solicitations for their good health.

Captain Hautier arose, a grotesque grin stretching from ear to ear across his broad face. The boy scientist was in the act of taking his seat at the table when the stocky navigator raised his hand and stayed him. Then waving Jason to his feet with great pseudo-solemnity after the manner of the jester that he was, proceeded to introduce the two men, thus: "Professor Sands, shake hands with Comrade Jason Sands of New Hampshire." Then turning to Jason he continued: "This young man is Comrade Professor Quimby Sands, also from New Hampshire. He is the inventor of this wonderful ship with all of its machinery and devices for life-saving and life-giving, as well as the airship that rescued you and your party last night, and the great *optiscopograph*, or right-angle-triangle radium ray. Who knows but that you two boys may be related?"

The two men were facing each other. The one huge, and broad and grey, the other young, fully as tall but less broad, and possessing a gorgeous wealth of curly auburn hair. Suddenly the battered patriarch leaned forward, his face the color of chalk! He was staring at a small peculiar scar over the other's left eye. No man spoke but every breath was stayed. It was a pregnant moment! All eyes were on

Jason Sands, who was shaking as with a palsy. Into his sad, far-gazing eyes, a new light appeared. They were riveted on the prototype of his erstwhile self before him. The other seemed to have turned to marble. It was a magnificent sight, this picture of vigorous youth and hoary age. Presently two pairs of pale lips parted. Four hands shot out to embrace as with a single impulse. Four eyes filled with tears—tears of joy and victory, as two voices cried out in unison:

“My father!”

“My boy!”

A scene for the gods was this! There was not a dry eye at that moment. Even Jocular Joe, the blithe salt-dog of the sea, fell a victim of his own buffoonery, and laughed acrying as father and son, arm-in-arm, headed for the private den of the wizard prince. Neither man spoke, but the younger waved a hand as they passed from view and all understood. Also Symbols knew, and flew to give orders for a lunch for two to be served, for the first time, in the wonderous muted “tune” room which his beloved “Fessor,” as he called him, termed his “Laboratory.”

Jason Sands had found his long lost son. He had found him in the most marvelous manner and under circumstances rivaling in their startling character the fabled romances of the Arabian Nights. Strangely

enough the father and son were the first on deck after the morning meal. What with the rapid turn of rapidly occurring events, the rest were prone to long-drawn-out discussions and much merrymaking.

With the beautiful silver-like vessel riding at anchor on the peaceful waters of the Sound, they sat in the August sunshine of that north latitude and listened, each to the other's story of the separation that had been so cruel and so long. Who in *The Image* shall come to paint the picture of that grand reunion? Who of tongue or pen the yearning of their souls may tell? Many partings there have been, but reunions such as this had seldom come. Who but loved ones that have parted can ever understand? Men in human form there be who never understand, and they are not all men who wear the human form: the mental helots at the two poles of society—the brutalized rich and the brutalized poor—both human infusoria! These can never understand. The subservient hireling can never know. O shame on him who knows not he is a slave! Shame on him who cannot shed a tear! Shame on him who fears a healthy dream; who dare not think a rebel thought; who will not read the printed page! How hardly may such ever know, or feel, or come to understand?

Joe Hautier, the big, jolly captain (and a bigger "jolly" than he was a captain),

came suddenly upon little Yama Yama hiding near, and listening eagerly to the fervored conversation of father and son, as they reviewed each his futile efforts of the past to find each other. It was evident, though he had been among the Americans less than a month, that the chubby Japanese understood the new, strange companionship of his dearly loved rescuer and the older man with only one leg, for he was clearly weeping. The boy was an orphan. His father and two brothers had bought the badge of "patriotism" dearly with their blood at Port Arthur. When the news came home to the little mother, she was lying on a sick bed. She had been taught, and likewise she had taught her sons, that it was noble and glorious to both kill and be killed in battle! The very foundation of all religions is cemented to "civilization" with the blood of wars. She called little Yama Yama to her side and told him she was going to die. "My son," she said, "it is good to die." "Harken, my son, for I, your mother, am dying. The Russians killed your father who built our little home here among the flowers. They killed your brothers who taught you to build temples to Buddha in the soft sands of the seashore. It is glorious! Would that you, too, my son, had been older. Grow strong and brave, my son, that thy blow may fall hard upon a beating heart, and thy red blood

splash hot on the face of thy, perchance, more powerful adversary."

The babe had listened to her dying words, and his every wakeful moment he dreamed of the flashing sword and the crackle of musketry, and of the hot blood-splashings, and of the day when he, too, might become a brave soldier, to feel the hot splash upon his own cheek as he vanquished a less fortunate fellow in battle, or yielding up his own, as the Great Mikado should direct. No amount of influence aboard the *Agitator* had, as yet, sufficed to change him, although he loved, and was in turn loved by all; for these teachings were the last words of his mother, and "was she not his mother?"

The *Agitator* had found the boy starving while cruising the western waters for pictures. Her regal spirit, the young scientist, picked him up and made him cabin boy—if cabin boy on board the *Agitator* that service may be called. Captain Joe loved the bright lad with all his great, fond heart; for Joe had none to call him sire, and like all who near the Summit where no flowers grow to bless their coming, he was beginning to starve for children. But he liked to tease the little cherub, and to startle him with his clown-like frown; for Joe Hautier had never been tried for being a handsome man!

“Here, you young tadpole,” he snapped in mimic anger, “I caught you that time! Spying on shipboard, ‘eh?’” Down went the innocent Jap on knees and face, his tiny hands clasped above his head, as he implored his holy commander not to chop off his miserable head, a punishment he firmly believed his awful offense warranted. Back and forth he groveled, his little black eyes fairly hanging from the bias slits in his yellow cheeks. The poor waif promised by all the gods and Buddha, and all the snakes, frogs, and dragons, and a whole lot of other things of which the droll Frenchman was unfamiliar, that never would he do it again, never, *never!* if only his worthless head might be spared.

“Yama Yama—Symbolee, la lo lee Jap!” wailed the simple heathen. “Him falla Lushian killela! Poor Yama Yama! Him twola bloula samee Lussian warlee killela! Poorlee Symbolee—Yama Yama! O Capta Ota, *gomen! gomen!*”

“Sure little hun, I *will* forgive you,” soothingly the bluff seaman cried; “and now forget it and climb up here and get in your old ‘Capta Ota’s’ vest pocket and sing me a heathen song all in that monkey tongue of yours.” And stooping to the sobbing child the bronzed sailor gathered up the little lump of foreign drift-wood and tenderly caressed away the penitent tears.

"I hope that will teach you a lesson," he chided himself when it was all over and he was alone. "Poor kid! And to think that I once was that innocent and ignorant myself! Who have I to thank that I did not stay that way? There are millions of them—*millions* of them, poor little orphans—victims of capitalistic butchery," he added sorrowfully.

Ere the water had dried from Toy's dusky tresses subsequent to her rescue from the Yukon River, she was breathing easily and resting painlessly on a swinging cot in the *Agitator*'s hospital. When taken from the water the girl was dead. She had been drowned! but the modern methods of extracting water from the lungs, together with the Sands method of acceleratory circulation and forced respiration, had never failed where positive death of the blood corpuscles from coagulation in the heart had not already taken place. It did not fail now. A human life in perfect health had been snatched from the red fangs of death; but the good priest said it was the works of the Devil, and that God's law had been confounded and His will defied!

It was while seated in his laboratory testing the temperature and adjusting the sensitive electrical machinery to the Cosmic Tune, that young Sands had noticed a slight disturbance of the seismographic needle, followed by the report of the ex-

plosion recorded on the sounding board of the *oscillophone*. With a swift movement he opened the shutter, and the wonderful ray of white light that had given the natives such a needless scare, was playing on the wreck ere the smoke lifted.

It came to him while reading Spencer, wherein he says: "Life is the continuous adjustment of internal relations with external relations," that, *Life* is simply a chemical tune played upon the Great Harp—*Change*. All things in the Universe were so much chemical substance, animated into cellular activity and correlated, specialized and united in organisms according to temperature and environment from within and from without. Nothing was "made," and fixed, and set up to be, but everything was a growth, an evolution, a transformation—a *change*. Man was simply *one note* in the Great Tune, Life. And to be a perfect note he must be in perfect tune with the Great Law—*Change*.

The planets are in tune, was his theory, and the planets are at peace with each other. "Man," he replied to the good priest, "is sadly out of tune with *Life*. This is why he withers, sickens, weakens, fails and dies. I have given this girl back her life only by restoring her to *tune* with *Life*, and you tell me I have beaten down the parapets of Heaven, overthrown the authority and destroyed the law of God!"

Well, then, if it is God's will that the innocent become victims of cold-blooded murder for profit, and further, if it be true that I have overruled the Supreme Court of Heaven, blasted the mandates of its saintly congress and vetoed the dictum of such a god, then I am greater than he, and henceforth he will have to show me, as they say in Missouri. I am highly delighted to become a rebel under such circumstances, and I have only love and pity for the dumb dupes who will meekly tolerate such a deadly invasion of their rights without resenting the bald insult to their intelligence."

Now in the case of "Bluebeard" it was different. There was neither air nor water in his lungs, but they were full of bones instead. The bones Jason had broken were turned in, piercing the lungs and inflicting ample wounds to cause death in the ordinary man; but this was no ordinary individual. Jason's blow had wrought a complete disarrangement of the functional organisms, and caused a discordant panic to take place among the cell life which rendered the big man temporarily helpless. But with the broken bones quickly replaced, the lungs freed of dead blood, and with the scientific treatment he received at the hands of the *Agitator's* surgical mechanics, the big beast refused to lay quiet, and when the other two robbers were

turned over to the authorities the following afternoon he went with them to answer, unjustly, for one more of Capitalism's social crimes. The three repentent men made full confessions to the officers in the presence of the good priest, thus obviating the annoyance of detaining the *Comet's* crew as witnesses at the trial.

"It is with deepest regret that we are compelled to turn these poor boys over to you to have their wretched lives jerked out at the end of a rope," the scientist said, as the pudgy commander of the Revenue Cutter blustered authoritatively up and down the *Agitator's* deck.

"It is the law, sir; it is the law, and these murderers must pay the penalty as they justly deserve. They must be punished, sir; and they'll get what's coming to them, sir, and don't you forget it, sir," thundered the red-faced thug in water-cop uniform.

"Yes, it *is* the law!" sadly reflected the other, "the law that sees only effect, and never concerns itself with cause. It is the law of self-interest. The law of 'might makes right'—the law of the strong ruling the weak with an iron hand! It is the law which punishes 'crime' with more crime, aggravating rather than lessening the disease it pretends to cure. It belongs to the Dark Ages, and has no place among civilized men of this progressive period."

"Do you mean to tell me, sir," exploded the United States authority on contraband rum, "fur-fishes" and opium smuggling, "that you milk-and-water mollycoddles would abolish all law, insult the dignity of Uncle Sam, and turn the country over to thieves, murderers and scoundrels and let them go unpunished? That's Socialism, is it?" he stormed on, "if I had my way I would plant a mine under you anarchists and blow you all to kingdom come. So that's your game, 'er?"

Jason Sands, who, a moment ago, was seated gazing disinterestedly far out to sea, drew up and eyed the squat boss of the North Pacific through narrowed lids from which a strange light gleamed! He had noticed a slight curling of his son's lip as that young man turned to flash a silent signal to Capt. Hautier, while the bland Father Munne rubbed his fat hands gleefully, and it could be seen where *his* economic interests blended.

"Why don't you answer the Government Officer, sir?" the good priest challenged. "Are you afraid to reply to the honorable commander's most pertinent question, sir?"

"No. I am not afraid to speak," responded the *Agitator's* inventor, still sadly. "Among other things, my early teaching was to the effect that God favored some men with more brains than others, and that those so favored were his chosen people,

who should always look with tolerance and due consideration on the feeble-minded. My heart suddenly overflowed with a great pity; for the moment, my tongue was engulfed and in pure charity my speech was drowned. How may the tongue of reason answer to the logic of fools? Men who absorb their ideas from the same source from which their cheques are drawn may not be expected to pose as paragons of justice and virtue. And if it were true that the Socialists propose to turn the country with its 100,000,000 souls over to a worse gang of 'robbers, murderers and scoundrels' than which at present have the nation and its people by the throat, I confess I am at a loss to know where this side of Hell they are to be found."

"And now you, Captain Mullock," Jason volunteered, stepping close beside that irate functionary, "are but a creature—a uniformed watchdog of a robber plutocracy which makes criminals out of honest men and the children of honest parents, then turns around and jails or hangs them to hide its own guilt, distracting, thereby, the wrath of the ignorant populace from the real offenders while it piously soaks the crimson stains from its taloned claws with the crocodile tears of religious hypocrisy."

As he departed with his three hapless prisoners, Capt. Mullock indulged in a hasty brain-storm of eagle-scream patriot-

ism, furiously swearing he would blow all kinds of hell out of the *Agitator* and her whole "red-throated" outfit if they were anywhere on the horizon at sunrise.

"We will not be here, Captain Mullock," the boy assured him, "for," said he, "we are billed to exhibit our horns to the grafters of Victoria, British Columbia, and Seattle, Washington, to-morrow night, and as it is a stroll of some four thousand miles we shall have to get an early start this very evening in order to visit along the way and make it a pleasure trip for our new-found friends. But perhaps we shall meet again, so cheer up, the worst is yet to come."

"And now you get back to your old booze tub and don't let's hear another yip out o' you, or I'll boil you like a lobster in a pot," Captain Hautier commanded. And with this he pressed his hand inside his spotless linen coat, and up shot the mighty white pillar of flame for a space, then down came the angular pillar like a white sunbeam and played upon the other craft, revealing its black hulk through the darkness like a phantom ship on a desert sea.

As the brass-buttoned giver of orders (taken from higher up) pushed off from the *Agitator*, her grinning commander gave another signal, and the *angular ray* was joined by another *electro-radium* shaft shot straight out from the ship like the boom of a mainsail. With this the ray began to

spin around the government cutter like skip-waters around the head of an adder. At the first impact there shot up a gigantic water-spout hundreds of feet in height. Added to this came a hissing and sizzling noise like boiling water mingled with escaping steam, or like cold water spilled on a red-hot stove. Around and around the fire-shaft flew, until it resembled a great cornucopia of daylight in the midst of midnight. The water boiled, foamed and leaped high up in the air, while the little wooden craft rocked and pitched, rolled and floundered, the crew wildly yelling the while with fear.

Captain Mullock shook his fat fist back at the *Agitator*, and fumed, swore and snarled in a loud voice that nobody could hear or understand.

Having thus amused himself to his heart's content, Captain Hautier once more pressed his hand inside his coat and the boom-like ray was cut off and the boiling ceased, though clouds of steam continued to rise for many minutes thereafter. Once on board his ship, Captain Mullock was seen to rush madly among his crew shouting orders and waving his short, fat arms like a bear in a bee's nest. Placing a small disk-shaped affair to his lips, Joker Joe called out to him: "I say, 'Dewey,' when is the firing to begin?" But the only reply that came back was the un-

mistakable rumble of anchor heaving, and in a remarkably short space of time the "*Terror*" was under way and rapidly disappearing into the darkness down the Sound.

A reception and entertainment on board the *Agitator* had been announced for that very evening, and boat after boat from the shore had already pulled along side with its load of wonder-wrought humanity. The performance with the *triangle ray* was resumed, and many marvelous and beautiful colorings were added to the radio-activity. Then came the electro-magnetic currents, which vitalized the radium pillar and its auxiliary triangle, causing it to spread out into a perfect figure four, not unlike in appearance an enormous sail of white fire, reaching into the very heavens and stretching far out over the sea and land. Without the electro-magnetic currents the light was perfectly cold and harmless; but with this well-known power as an accompaniment, a terrific heat was generated that nothing on earth or in earth could withstand. Also a splendid thunder and lightning display was as simple and easy of manipulation as the turning of a switch or the pressing of an electric button. And the wonders of this new discovery did not stop here. In fact its uses were almost limitless; and among the many benefits with which it was come to bless

mankind, were the creating of a cool, vitalizing shower of rain in the brightest and hottest day in summer, or the coldest day in winter. It could dispel the darkness and cold of a winter's night, turning it into a warm and perfect day; and when young Sands first conceived of it, it had been simply his intention to create a better means of lighting for great cities. But in this hope he had met with only partial success, for, as yet, he had not perfected the *umbrella ray* upon which he still experimented all of his spare time.

The night was now dark, and the next number on the program was the *Comet*. 'Twas this the natives had come to see. There was a bustle of excitement amidships when a small aluminum tube pushed itself up through the center of the whale-back deck and announced in a loud voice, a thousand times clearer than ever came from the throat of man, that the *Comet* was about to appear, and for all hands to crowd aft and stand still.

The adjustable observatory or "crow's nest," was occupied by the two Sands', Jack Philips, the Mexican and his young bride, and little Symbols, who clung close to the wizard, that he might be safe while missing nothing of the performance. Presently came the sound of slipping bolts, then the whole fore half of the long, narrow deck opened in a scalloped, or saw-tooth

line in the center, the two forward quarters sliding back and down inside the hull. In less time than it can be told a huge black thing of metal that looked like a giant gnat, pushed up through the opening and leaped into the air like a kangaroo. With the leap into the air came the spreading of a pair of great, bat-like wings, and in the same instant the whole frightful thing from nose to tail, became a living streak of binding flame and was gone!

Nothing like the speed of that meteor-bird is possible of description. In an infinitesimal fraction of a second, and with a whistling hiss that almost paralyzed the hearing, it was far out over the rolling sea. Up it shot into the sky, up and up, and still up! Rocket is no name for it. There is no name for it! Its course was marked by a mile of crooked lightning. Then at a dizzy height, miles above the ocean and miles to the westward of the ship, it righted, toned down its radiance to a mere glow of red, beat its wings for a few moments against the night and dived straight down like a falling star and plunged head-on into the black billows of Behring Sea!

Breathless silence, then the screams of women mingled with hoarse outbursts of terror and monstrous oaths from the toil-hardened men arose from the appalled spectators in a discordant explosion of

heart-felt fear. Up to the point where the infernal thing dived for the water, the *Agitator* had remained wrapped in darkness; but when the *Comet* disappeared below the waves, the exact spot was marked with the index point of the great *finder ray*, which had been manipulated from the ship with the unison and accuracy of a trained marksman. There on the *Agitator* stood the pillar of radium, and from its topmost apex and hinged like a jackknife blade, as it were, with the "blade" rapidly shutting up into the radium handle, streamed down the angular *finder*—the same ray that had anticipated the wreck of the *Aurora*, and saved the lives of her survivors in the Yukon River. This done, and quicker than thought, the pillar was cut off, as the "knife blade" of light shut up. Then up from the very bowels of the Deep rose the *Comet*, all her lean length aflame. Over the ship it flew, dived again into the water, rose and circled and cut and dodged, like the hissing lash of a whip of fire in the hands of some mighty giant, madly flogging the earth and sky, so swiftly and terribly did it cut the Northern night.

Of a sudden the thing came from somewhere out of the darkness with all her lights out, and there she stood, flapping her thin wings above the deck, a moment later to settle down on her supports, finally to disappear into the maw of the *Agitator*,

from whence she came. Of course the crowd clamored for a look at close range; but there was a long programme, and in five minutes all hands were seated in the long auditorium of the little theater, including the good priest from up the Sound.

“My remarks will be brief,” the speaker was saying. “But you want to know who we are and why we have come among you with our strange ways and our stranger ships and philosophies. We are but men. We are Socialists—agents of the Co-operative Commonwealth. That is an economic and political system opposed to Capitalism, and we are agitating for the purpose of enlightening men that they may help Progress to dig a grave for that rotting old carcass. We are presenting you with this free entertainment on our ship for the purpose of showing you that there is something better in this world than frost and gold. We are come to bring you good news. In the literature that you will receive free at the door in passing out, you will find mapped out a plan whereby man may safely live among his fellows without the haunting fear of being eaten by his more powerful brother.

Under Socialism, the cost of living will never rise, compelling those whose scarred hands have created all the wealth of the world to eat garbage.

"I read about a fellow here in this north country one time, who had to eat his moccasins when game got scarce, and finally he had to fall back on his leather suspenders. I bet that when he was scabbing the job on an overtime shift trying to masticate that dainty repast, he thought of what 'Honest Abe' said about men eating their bread in the sweat of other men's faces. Abe might have said 'backs' instead of 'faces,' but he didn't, and if those suspenders were good ones the rail splitter had one on that guy all right!

"But game won't be scarce under Socialism—only the skin game. That's the only game that pays under Capitalism. That's the reason capitalists are always rich and you always poor. You raise all the skin and then hand the knife over to the capitalist. He takes your pelt off at every skinning time—every election—and then you settle right down to hard work again growing another hide. You do this every four years, and the only thing you ever kick about is when some one touches you on the sore spot where your scalp comes off.

"There is a certain tree growing in South Africa, the bark of which is a valuable commercial commodity. Each year the corporations dealing in this commodity hire the natives to peel the bark off, and the tree immediately proceeds to grow a new bark, which is again taken off the next

year. Now the amount of bark a native can peel in a day is worth to the company one thousand dollars; and for performing this slight daily service the God-ordained corporation generously gives the "free born" native thirteen cents.

"Problem No. 1. Which gets the worst skinning, the tree or the native. (Silence, protracted and almost uncanny silence.)

"Problem No. 2. Which do you think is the first to tumble to the racket, the 'free born' native or the tree. (More of the same.)

"I will tell you who gets the worst of it, and you will be surprised to learn that it is the 'free born' native. And it is the tree which first wakes up, for, after seven years of this kind of 'thrift and industry' it refuses to grow another bark. But do you think that big, husky, 'free born,' living, breathing man ever gets tired of giving his pretty master nine hundred and ninety-nine dollars and eighty-seven cents every blessed twenty-four hours for the 'inalienable right' to slave ten hours of it for thirteen cents? Never! No 'dividing up' for him! To abolish his master and turn the whole forest over to himself would be 'free love' and the 'destruction of the home!' They have worked this old gag on him so long one would think he would begin to tumble; but then, they have been throwing the same hooks into you fellows for lo,

these many moons, and you have not awakened!"

"Some on us is beginnin' tue, by cat, and don't you forget it!" drawled out an old Forty-niner, and the larger half of the grizzled miners applauded and laughed.

"Read our literature. It will help you out of poverty. It will tell you how that every human creature shall have a home. It will tell you how that every love shall find a lover's mate; how that every life shall be secure in peace and plenty, and how that happiness shall reign throughout the earth for all mankind.

"The day is at hand when you people who brave the Northland won't have to live out all your lives trying to get warm. It strikes me that if I had to freeze to death I would hate to be a whole life time doing it. Down on the Gulf Coast, where I have a ranch, the only thing we have to look out for is wind. It blows so hard down there out of the Gulf that the farmers have to shingle their cows to keep the salt water out of the milk. The crops, you know, all grow on a slant inland, and we build our houses that way, on a bias, so the chamber windows will be on the ground floor, and so the children won't have so far to fall when the houses blow away, you see," persisted the jesting Joe.

"Yaw, haw, haw! Ah don't guess you're overshootin' a whole lot, stranger. Ah'm

f'm Corpus Christi myself; wow!" bawled out a lank individual with an aquiline nose and a wash smile. When the rest of the Texans had sufficiently subsided, the fun flowed on, with everybody in good spirits and perfectly at ease.

"The reason I am telling you all these things is just to show you the difference between the place where I sometimes live, and this graveyard where you people come to die while trying to get a little something to live on. You miners burn holes in the earth here in Alaska, but we don't do that in Texas. The sun does that for us. But we do have to break out the roads every day there, the same as you do here; only it's sand and alkali instead of snow, and our forests are all found under ground, like "good" Indians. But we never eat our boots in Texas, for to die without our boots on is the worst disgrace a Texan can suffer," he said.

The assemblage comprised a curious heterogeneity of impatient humanity, whose applause at the captain's spicy remarks was loud and genuine. There were both men and women, yes, and many little children of all ages and sizes. Men with bearded faces, and faces red, brown, black and yellow. Top boots, moccasins and stockinginged feet. Wool suits, skin suits, fur suits and calico; and some wrapped in blankets.

Then on came the pictures!

There were the contrasted rich and poor, to show the wide economic and social gulf between these two classes of capitalistic society. These colored slides were made from photographs taken in St. Louis (the city that has to be "boosted"), where dead horses lay for weeks in the streets, both summer and winter; and where dead men lay where they meet death until they freeze, between the rails of trolley lines. Here were scenes from the wretchedest slums anywhere to be found in the "Land of the Free and Home of the Brave!"

First came a West End mansion costing \$3,000,000, and owned by an ex-gambler, now a corporation judge.

Out in front stood a fine \$15,000 automobile, and happy children played games on a beautifully kept lawn among the flowers and fountains, and all around were nice graveled walks and many shade trees. The next was a scene from the East Side slums in the city of New York. A tenement house of crumbling red brick, one of a single block in which were herded twenty thousand starved souls. Children of all ages, and in great numbers, swarmed the festering, narrow streets like rats; some in rags, and some without even these to cover their pitiful nakedness. Ash barrels and barrels of swill littered the three-foot sidewalk. Into these swill barrels the arms of snotty urchins were being thrust to the

elbows for food, while hundreds were madly fighting each other for a grab at the rotting garbage. Dead cats and dead rats, mingled with heaps of accumulated pollution, clogged the narrow alleys, and from every window sweltered bedraggled, half-starved mothers holding bat-faced, naked babes which looked like ventriloqual figures, save for the gaudy raiment of which they had none.

Following this frightful scene the operator showed the interior of another mansion —the home of a society queen!

In a gorgeous dining room, seated at a sumptuous feast, with butler and many servants standing at attention, the bawd-attired mistress of a screw-tail terrier fed that ten-thousand-dollar beast sponge cake and cream from her own plate, while her shrimp of a husband dabbled mincingly in venial acquiescence over his squab on toast at the foot of the table.

In the wake of this social example of twentieth century Gomorrahism came the vivid picture of a garret abode up under the skylight in a squalid hive down in the Ghetto. Lying there on a heap of soiled rags in the corner, gasped the emaciated wreck of a starving washerwoman dying from the white plague! In her bony arms was clasped the nude body of her dead baby, whose thin, white lips still clung to a dry nipple on her flabby breast!

At the sight of these horrors of Christian civilization the audience of honest work-folk shuddered and groaned, audibly cursed and tearfully wept!

It was at this point that the good priest from up the Sound sprang to his feet and wildly gesticulating, demanded that these "scurrilous and defamatory" pictures be stopped. Waving his arms and angrily shouting from his seat among his parishioners, he screamed: "You are a gang of devils and are disturbing the public confidence! The government ought to adopt positive measures—if need be—to have you and your seditious practices suppressed." And as he was not ejected for this he courageously ranted on: "You're a menace to the foundations of society! The conditions are as they are because it is God's will! When he wants them changed he will come in his wrath amid fire and thunder, wielding a two-edged sword! The wicked shall be judged and—"

"A—men!" squeaked a wheezy old geezer of perhaps ninety. Thus reinforced, the Godly hierarch victoriously climaxed: "The ways of the Lord are not of our inferior understanding! Verily, he worketh strange miracles among his children, that they may know he is a jealous God, whom all must both love and fear! Remember this and bow submissively to your burdens, arduous



"The bawd-attired mistress of a screw-tailed terrier fed that \$10,000 beast sponge cake and cream from her own plate."

though they be and unending: 'The poor ye have with you always.' "

"*Dos vos no lie, mein schguy pilot friendt. Ve vill haf poor deffls mit uz alvays schoost so long as ve let you schleek deffls shdeer oor eyes up ud ver schtars vile you pig oor poggets und schdeal oor dusd, und vile der vrrrrich deffls vrrrride on oor backs,*" clanged out a fat Dutchman, standing the while and shaking a ham-like fist in the bloated face of the well-nourished priest.

Symbols peaked out from behind the wings and grinned, and the orchestra struck up the *Marseillaise*, and from the boxes on either side of the stage went up a subdued chuckle.

The operator, at a signal from the professor, started the motion pictures, and if the Romist was stirred at the colored slides, he was desperately mad now. The films were ten times worse than the stereopticon views, and showed the frightful hells of child slavery in the cities. The maimed and dead on the unspeakable battlefield. The poverty-stricken miners up from the depths of the cold, wet earth. And finally, a long line of "chesty" workingmen, dressed in their Sunday best, each smoking an "election" cigar and voting still once more for the very system by which they are perpetually, legally and systematically robbed.

But the holy man made no further outbreak and the pictures continued.

"We will show you how the ill-fated *Aurora* looked ten seconds after she was blown up," Captain Joe was promising. "You see, the *optiscopograph* is not only almost everything else, but it is also a device for the taking of motion pictures. It is always loaded, and we never leave it for a moment without an operator." All the horrors of that awful ride to death, the fight with the robbers when Jack Philips choked two of them into insensibility after Jason had knocked the chief overboard, and then the rescue was run off. But the surprise of all came when the exact reproduction of the recent exhibition of the *Comet* was thrown on the screen of the little floating theater. Also there was the captain of the *Terror*, pulling for dear life for his government ship, while the water leaped and boiled around her, just as it had all occurred only an hour since. It was all so wonderful that the crowd sat, for the most part, motionless and speechless with awe.

As the astonished and delighted natives filed out upon the deck, each was presented with the classified literature of the new Democracy together with a copy of the *Appeal to Reason*, a red-hot Socialist paper published at Girard, Kansas, and enjoying the modest circulation of a million. This was the paper whose editor, Fred. D. Warren,

had been sentenced to serve six months in jail and to pay a heavy fine for two specific reasons, viz.: First, because he was a man, and second, because he dared to stand face to face against the Beast and fight for the rights of the disinherited workers of the world, hurling defiance in the teeth of the most corrupt, but withal, the most powerful government on earth.

The good priest from up the Sound was the last over the rail, and as the *ray* went up to light the boats ashore, he was seen to gesticulate wildly as he harangued his rapidly diminishing followers, and what he promised to have done to the *Agitator* when she should arrive at Victoria, as recorded on the registers of her wireless telephones, may be more lawfully imagined than said!

CHAPTER VI.

REASON AND A STONE.

Through midnight murk the craven coward crept
With Judas mien to shame the graveyard ghoul;
Nor warning gave; but e'en as jackals prowl,
Or dastard Tarquin slunk to couch be foul
And ravage virtue while the household slept,
He struck with unseen hand his brother down!
And in night's shroud of gloom and Stygian gown,
Apostate to his soul, the seury lown
Fled stealthily, the while a people wept!

“You tell us Socialism is against the Church,” the speaker was saying. “When cornered, you admit that you know nothing about Socialism. And this is your idea of knowledge and philosophy! But I say to you here tonight, that Socialism is against everything that interferes with religious liberty.

“Socialism is opposed to everything that fetters intelligence with the shackles of superstition and fear.

“Socialism is at war with ignorance, falsehood and slavery, and everything that hangs like mill-stones around the neck of Progress.

“Socialism is opposed to the sword and the Gatling gun. It is opposed to war, and the spilling of blood. It strikes at poverty and drunkenness, and the hangman's noose.

It seeks to abolish crime and the causes of crime. It will do away with profit and pull down the Golden Calf of Mammon. It will make child slavery impossible. It will make poverty impossible. It will make ignorance impossible, and it will banish the ghosts of danger and insecurity forever from human society.

“If the Church is in favor of any of these it is against Progress and humanity.

“If the Church is in favor of the few rioting in idle luxury off the toil of the many it stands for an exalted parasitism on the one hand and slavish pauperism on the other.

“If the Church stands for an idle class of gold-spurred vermin riding on the backs of the masses of starving poor, it is at war with liberty. It is against peace and the security of the home. It is arrayed in battle royal against Progress and human justice, and, I say, if such be true, Socialism will hit it one everlasting swat!

“I am ashamed of you hypocrites who parrot the sayings of the Galilean. I am ashamed of my brother and my sister who can read the story of one starving newsboy and excuse their complicity in the crime by blaming the outrage onto God. It may be God’s will that there are ten millions of hungry half-naked children in these glorious United States tonight; but if it is, then I

am proud to announce that I deny and repudiate that kind of a god.

“The god you worship and the church you are afraid Socialism will pull down, may stand for seven millions of starving unemployed workingmen continually tramping the streets of the great cities under the starry folds of Old Glory; but the god with whom Socialists are chummy doesn’t spell his name with the same number of letters. The god of Socialism is the God of Humanity.

“Socialism will not interfere with any man’s religion. It will not demand that a man be souzed in ice-water to the danger of his life that his soul may legally undertake to sprout a crop of pin-feathers. But it will make it intellectually possible for him to get next to the raw deal that is being pulled off on him, and then if he still prefers the deception to what he knows to be the truth, why, no one will be to blame but himself.

“Socialism will not oppose any man’s faith. He may believe what he pleases so long as he is satisfied to enslave only himself with such belief. Pretty much all the Socialists with whom I am acquainted are slow to make believe a thing they have found to be a lie. This may seem like insanity to the orthodox mind; but then, the orthodox mind is to progress what lead is

to a life-preserved. It is belief, belief, and still more belief!

“Belief has been the miasma of decadence polluting the social atmosphere for forty thousand years. Socialists seek not belief but *knowledge!* Belief is uncertainty, knowledge is reality. If I know a thing I do not have to believe it. It has then become fact and requires not belief, but knowledge to sustain it.

“A theory may look like truth, but no scientist will accept it as such without a thorough scientific investigation and analytical test; if it stands the test of a scientific analysis, it becomes known and classified, and is a reality. If, on the other hand, it fails to make good under the searching light of reason, it will be relegated to oblivion by thinking people, and only the faith of fools will be pinned to its shoddy shain.

“The science of the future will be the science of *Self*. And that which will not stand the test of a scientific analysis will have to go.

“To believe a thing is to doubt it. To know a thing is to realize it. If we did not first doubt it we would not and could not believe it. Belief is one individual’s guess plagiarized by another individual who hadn’t enough brains to make a good, healthy guess for himself.

“Of all the venial, garrot-eyed things that crawl on belly through Capitalism’s

slimy social drains, the unblushing "saint" who deceives an innocent child into believing a malevolent lie is the most despicable of all the long list of sneak-thieves, snatch-baggers and false friends that ever attached feed end to the economic larder of our social structure. He is literally a social barvel! It is said that all things have their double. If this be true, and if this conscienceless charlatan and depraved moral papsucker can be matched anywhere among the leeches, perverted pimps and reactionary deadwood that clutters the path of Progress, I can not think where, unless it be with the brutal father who violates the virginity of his own daughter; the unnatural mother who deserts her helpless offspring, or the savage beast that devours its first-born young.

"But, under Socialism, if a man wants to believe he is a jackass he shall have that privilege, and no one will make himself ridiculous by criticizing the harmless brayings of an honest ass.

"If you want to believe you are the reincarnated spirit of a devil-fish you will be protected in that right, so long as you don't try to get some of the same superstitious soup into me, otherwise you will quickly be shown to a padded cell as a means of public safety.

"If you want to imagine that you are better than I am, and that you are bound

to grow a pair of immaculate wings while I am to be doomed, dammed and devoured in red-hot brimstone, it won't get you very far into trouble so long as you keep your feet out of my trough. But if you insist on me agreeing with you before I could have a job of useful work, I shall see to it that you are straightway apprehended and suppressed as a public nuisance.

"Under Socialism a man may know a great deal provided he possesses the mental capacity for thought; if not, then he may still believe a great deal! He may believe there is a god and six devils on every street corner. He may believe that souls are feathered things, and that God don't consider the body worth a damn! If you want to believe there is a God who demands that you both fear and love him, you may undertake the paradoxical gymnastics of such a mental performance, and contort your cerebral machinery until the safety valve blows out. You may believe there is a heaven and a hell, or as many as you like; and if you believe you are going to Heaven and want to go there, you may go to Heaven and take your trunk, or you may go to Hell if you want to. But you won't have any right to take me with you if I am satisfied to stay here."

Ashworth was a small place, a manufacturing town built on a small stream among the hills. There were saw mills and

tanneries and a glove factory there. Also there were cotton mills, hosiery mills, a grist mill and a woolen mill; and it was in this latter roaring slave pen that Jason Sands had worked eleven hours a day when a mere lad, "twisting in" warp for twenty-seven looms. He had not been there very long when he invented a new process, which process was promptly stolen from him. And then he was discharged for having the audacity to protest. It was said to be a "hot" town! That is to say, it encompassed more crime, vice and drunkenness to the square inch than other towns of its size which were considered less "hot."

Canadian-French were given the preference over the natives in the mills, for, having no ideas of free government, they could be depended upon to vote as told and they would not join a union. Moreover, they would work for anything offered them and no thought of dissatisfaction ever crept into their skulls; for they were, every mother's son of them, good and devout Catholics.

And so, while the soil was fertile enough, it was so choked with inherited ignorance and intellectual weeds that Socialism had taken root very slowly, and then only after a long and tedious uphill propaganda by a handful of courageous comrades. The lecture which Leland Tannerhill had come to attend was the first of its kind ever ad-

vertised in the community, and the task our friend from the Southwest was up against was not an envious one.

“I opened this discourse with the statement that Socialism is an economic and political question,” the big Texan resumed, “and you leap to your feet and demand to know what the Socialist position is concerning religion. Did you ever ask any of the bell-weathered flock of the Republican or Democrat parties a question like that? No! That question has never been trotted out for the purpose of combating the politics of any but the Socialist. You know better than to interrogate any of the old partyites on this ticklish point. You know, only too well, their position on the Church. They stand *for* it, and they stand *on* it! And when its morals become too slippery for firm footing, as is frequently the case, they proceed in self-protection to clap on the lid and *sit* on it.

“The Church has always been found on the side of Capitalism; and Capitalism has ever been found on the *backs* of the workers.

“It is none of your business what I believe regarding religion. That is my own private affair. If your church is what is claimed for it, *i. e.*, ‘builded on the solid rock of righteousness,’ it is in no fear from evil influences—surely not from the peaceful Brotherhood of Man. ‘The works of a

just God cannot be destroyed.' It is only the sham that fears the light of reason. Does your church fear the light? If you want to enrage a beast show it red. If you would discomfort a fakir uncover his fraud. If you wish to frighten a murderer let him see blood—LOOK AT YOUR HANDS!"

The gentleman who had croaked out the old familiar "Socialism will destroy religion" bug, was seated away back in the rear of the hall where the light was dim; but Stanley could see that he wore a seedy old broadcloth coat of the ancient orthodox country preacher cut, that he was old, and all hunched up in a heap like a hermit crab in a hank of wet kelp. With his last remark the speaker had reached far out over the audience to shake an accusing finger at him, and the crowd, which up to this point had remained deathly still, broke out in applause and every one turned to see what the "Old Scorpion," as he was called, would reply.

For forty years the old Shylock had kept a country store at Merrydeath Crossroads, and it was while engaged in the traffic of human necessities that he had acquired the additional *nom de guerre* of "Margin Bead-eye." This was for the double reason that first, his little round eyes retired far up near the timber line of his rennet-bag face, where they looked for all the world like two black beads just showing through their

pus-dripping lids. And secondly, because he was always whining to his customers that there was no "margin" (of profit) on the goods he sold them on credit *at five times their actual value*. The "scorpion" part was of more recent origin, and had been honestly earned by him in payment for his hatred of children and the eagerness with which he would "sting" every one with insult and abuse with whom he did not agree. Nevertheless, he was the main pillar of the richest church in the town, and while he still wore the same old clerical coat for best that he appeared in on the first Sunday of his arrival from—God only knows where—he was reputed to be the owner of more rents than all the rest of the community put together. But the eminently respectable gentleman—retired, had evidently had enough, for he did not reply. On the other hand, he sought the first opportunity when the house was engaged in an outburst of enthusiasm, to slink out into the autumn night.

Stanley Lark was at his best. He had heard the pathetic story of Tannerhill that afternoon, and if ever orator were inspired it was he. He drew a parallel of the Sands-Tannerhill case, staging it in a western town and using no names, but the audience understood; and as his voice rang out clear and powerful with the terrible indictment of the capitalist system, which

system he showed to be the cause of those two broken homes, his audience swayed and reeled in sympathy with his emotional eloquence, and many a tear of pity and shame was seen to fall as they gazed on the silvery locks of the last of the Tannerhills and realized the sorrow and hopelessness of his empty years.

"I am going to tell you the true story of the travels and adventures of a quart of milk," he said. "It is the history of all milk born in the country that gets canned and finds its way into the big cities. You farmers milk it from the cow fresh and pure. You sell it here delivered at the railroad station for three cents a quart. It goes to Boston on the train, is separated from its cream, dumped into a machine and 'raised' to two quarts, drugged with soda, formaldehyde—a deadly poison—"weighted," colored and thinned with dirty water, and then sold for twenty cents to *working people*. But that is only a part of its history. It has now only just started on its deadly career. A hollow-eyed wife and mother finds it at five o'clock in the morning at the foot of a pair of rickety back-stairs at the door of the rented shaek. John uses two teaspoonfuls in his cup of coffee. Those two spoonfuls of 'milk' contain seventy millions of deadly disease germs. And John has stomach trouble! Another man

gets John's job, and the coffin trust gets John.

"But even that isn't all. In a crib at the bedside, the blue, birdlike hands of an infant—John's and Mary's—clutch feebly at the rubber nipple of a nursing-bottle. And then it cries faintly, but with as much strength as it possesses, and Mary comes to bring some of the thin, blue stuff, some of which ten days ago was being milked from a real cow on a New Hampshire farm. The hungry babe greedily devours the taxidermized fluid, and with each swallow that the tiny throat takes in, goes thirty millions of bacteria along with the rest of the deadly dope. This is murder! But it is Capitalism—the profit system—and you voted for that system, and when you voted for that system you became the accomplice in crime, aiding and abetting in the annual murder of three millions five hundred thousand innocent babes in these United States of America, through the sale of impure milk alone. What will your children think of their fathers who assisted in the 'slaughter of the innocents?'

"In a few years Socialism will be here to change all this, and then what shall be said of men who voted for and placed the seal of license and respectability upon every crime known to mankind rather than 'shift their polities!'

“I know a man out west on an Arkansas ranch who is afraid that Socialism will compel him to ‘divide up!’ He told me so. There are a lot of people haunted with the same old familiar ghost. He showed me over the farm, and presently we came to a queer-looking iron machine, all painted and striped red and blue. It was a beautiful thing, and at first sight I thought it was some kind of a musical instrument. ‘That is a separator,’ he explained. ‘It separates the cream from the blue milk.’ Why do you separate it? I asked. ‘O, the cream goes to Galveston and is sold to the rich,’ he answered. And the blue milk? I inquired. ‘That stuff,’ said he, jerking his thumb in the direction of a large tank of it, ‘that ain’t fit for sellin’, I don’t guess; we eats that ourselves.’ How much did you pay for that machine? I next quizzed. ‘Three hundred dollars,’ was the answer. Ladies and gentlemen, I stared at that man; and while he did not look it, I realized that I had located a genuine, and very rare living specimen of the now almost extinct *Anencephalous Cebine*.

“Here was a man owning a splendid farm of as fertile soil as ever lay out of doors, who had given Capitalism three hundred dollars for a machine guaranteed to separate him from the best his farm produced, the cream, as it were, while he and his wife and little ones had to skimp along

on the blue milk! And this man, who assured me he was a good Democrat, would not vote for Socialism for fear he would have to 'divide up!' No wonder he was a Democrat! Any one who knows as much as that man knows can be a good Democrat! If he hadn't of known any more than to want that good cream for himself and family, he would have been fool enough to be a Socialist. But he'll die that way. The great and wise die young! He convinced me that he was killing himself with work, creating cream for his masters and starving to death the while amid plenty on a diet of whey.

"According to the figures of the United States Statisticians on Agruculture, a forty-acre farm in Arkansas will raise enough per annum to keep in first class condition three hundred healthy men. This man owned one hundred and sixty acres of the best land in the state. He had worked it early and late for thirty years and was poor. In the thirty years, according to the aforesaid reliable statistics, he had produced enough with his labor, conservatively speaking, to keep him comfortably for three thousand and three hundred years in abundance. And still this man didn't know enough to know that he was being skinned. Any person who knows as much as he does knows almost enough to be a Republican! Some of you people may know this mental

prodigy, his name is E. Z. Mark, and specimens of his kind may still be found throughout the United States, especially in the rural districts."

It was a good story, and well told; and it was evident that the speaker from Texas knew what he was talking about. He was making a decided hit with the farmers in his audience.

Leland was all attention. He liked Stanley Lark, and knew he was a good man. Also he knew he was speaking the truth, and he resolved right then and there to cast his lot with the Socialists and vote with them from now on. Life had suddenly assumed a new aspect. There *was* hope after all. These Socialists were different. They were not politicians, they were idealists—philosophers. In, and under and beyond their politics there was a greater thing than politics. There was a goal, which goal was an Idealism. They were a political party, but the political part was simply the legal machinery to be operated for the purpose of constructing executive policies, and the ballot was the legal instrument for capturing the powers of government from the other political parties, which parties simply changed works in the process of "separating" the wealth from the workers. The political party, then, was but a means—a conveyance—by which the millions of disinherited workers

were to ride to victory in the possession of the reins of government, and come into their own. He had wondered how they were going to do it, and now here was the secret. The speaker had made it all clear on that point when he said: "You desire to know 'how we are to do it!' The question is a remarkable one, and I must confess that I am astounded. After voting, all your lives, for political parties, you have to come to a Socialist to inquire how political parties get into power!"

The wit who had propounded this archaic, and time-worn socraticism, was the shyster lawyer, Jibbs. The speaker had gone to some length by way of making the deep, dark secret clear to his musty, besodden brain, and when he had finished there was no mistaking his meaning. "I will tell you how we are going to *try* to do it," he said, "and unless we are prevented by fraud, we will eventually win by this peaceful method. We will establish the Co-operative Commonwealth only after a majority of citizens have expressed their desire for Socialism through having voted the Socialist ticket at the ballot box.

"The Socialist party is a regularly organized political party with local headquarters in every city and town in the country. The name of our party is inscribed on the national ballot beside that of the Republicans and Democrats. Every

voter who votes, sees our name before him, and he can vote as easily for Eugene V. Debs, as he can for continuous performance Bill Bryan, Rafty Taftus, or Titmouse Ted, the man who thinks he is the reincarnated Caesar, and who believes he is destined to be Emperor I. of America. But Socialism appeals to intelligence, and no one will vote the Socialist ticket who is too ignorant to comprehend the principles of the philosophy of Socialism. When these principles are understood by the voters they become Socialists. When once a man becomes a Socialist, he will vote the Socialist ticket, first, last, and all the time ever after, and never any other.

“You don’t have to know very much to be a Socialist. You don’t have to know who invented the hobble skirt for women, nor why Jeffries chewed gum at Reno. Neither is it necessary that you post up on the science of Astronomy as practiced by the tree people ten million years ago. But you must know that you are being robbed and that you want to stop the robbery. You will surely have to pass that important examination, and when you have mastered political and social economy to that extent, you will know enough to vote with the Socialists and your ultimate graduation is as certain as that capitalist politicians will steal. If you feel that you cannot qualify under these circumstances, stick to the

Republicans and Democrats until you are sucked dry; for all you have to know to be a good partisan of either of these is: *you must know your master's voice!*

“When more Republicans and Democrats vote the Republican ticket than vote the Democratic ticket, the Republicans win, and go into power in the government. When more Democrats and Republicans vote the Democratic ticket than the Republican ticket, the Democrats win, and go into power. When more voters learn what Socialism means than vote both the Republican and Democratic tickets the working class will win and go into power in the government, and on that day will end the history of political corruption, otherwise known as graft.

“The reason the Socialists will have to have more votes to win than both the other parties named, is, that they are both one in interest, and will fuse at the last ditch to beat their common foe—the Socialist Party. They are both capitalist parties, the right and left wings of the same old bird of prey—Capitalism. The only reason for their dual existence is that, they must have some sensational means of fooling you at each election, and in order to keep the wool pulled over your eyes so that you cannot see with which hand they pick your pocket. They maintain a sham political fight, knowing that you will be too deeply

interested in watching the fun and choosing imaginary sides to think of building up a party of your own. Besides, at each election they pull all the wool off your backs, and, you know, you must have time for it to grow out again, so as to be in trim for another plucking."

Next he told them of governments, and why they were instituted among men. "You all know the popular theory," he said, "that all governments are for the purpose of 'securing the greatest good to the greatest number,' 'the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,' and all that fine-sounding bunk? We've been fed on that old warmed-over handout until it reminds me of the story of the city guy who went to the country to engage in the poultry business. Of course he had never seen a hen, but that didn't make any difference. Well, he was getting along all right until the village fool paid him a visit one day and advised him to mix sawdust with the cornmeal for feed to cut expenses. Then the village fool told a neighbor and the neighbor called and volunteered the same economic bill of fare. Also the neighbor told another neighbor, and the other neighbor called on the new hen man and parroted the same dope, told another neighbor, and so on until the excounter jumper hen man laid in a goodly supply of sawdust from the mill up the brook and

began feeding his flock the new diet, with the result that, all the chickens hatched had wooden legs.

“Now that’s exactly what has happened to you. Your fathers and mothers were slaves, you were conceived on an empty stomach, nurtured on a diet of political whey, with the result, not that you have wooden legs, but *wooden heads*.”

Stanley was noted for his good stories, and for the good-natured sarcasm with which they were told. Everybody laughed at this one, except those of the grim Republican ring and a puny gentleman with feminine shoulders and a receding chin, and wearing a collar that buttoned in the back. These soft-palmers seemed to grow shorter in their seats, and it could be seen that hatred, bitter and venene hatred, gleamed from beneath their shadowy brows.

“We are regularly fed and fattened on this cerebral embalming fluid by your lying old-party press, just prior to each annual killing at the polls. Moreover, the high-salaried old-party spellbinders periodically claw space and steer your eyes on the ‘blue dome of high Heaven,’ holding up first the ‘fool dinner pail,’ then the ‘tariff’ bug, and lastly, when all others fail, the bloody shirt of war.

“Shame on you workingmen! You fall for each and every one of these old empty husks, year after year, while prices go up

and your income goes down; and you march to the mournful notes of the muted funeral dirge to lay away your worn out dear ones over yonder on the hill among the white stones and the weeping willows.

“But you will not become Socialists, for to be a Socialist, from your point of reasoning, is to be a ‘turncoat!’ Now you have been educated to believe that a turncoat was about the most disloyal and traitorous slave in the whole yoked caravan of God-fearing, hocus-pocus worshiping citizenry. Your father on his deathbed told you that a ‘turncoat’ was a political backslider who had sunk so low in the scale of stand-pat-dom as to actually dare to change masters! Such were treason indeed!

“When your Republican master has become expert with the political knife in taking your economic hide off, why take the knife away from him and give it to the Democratic master? If I have to be skinned, I’d rather have the job done by an expert than a bungler whose hand is out and all atremble with stage-fright.

“The Socialist disclaims the honor of being a ‘turncoat.’ He is one who, seeing the old coat worn threadbare, discovers the thing to be nothing but shoddy anyhow, and so, instead of ‘turning’ the old coat for another threadbare wearing on the wrong side, flings the thing away bodily, and demands a new garment out of whole cloth.

He is not a 'turncoat,' but a rebel slave, awakened from his long cataleptic inertia to demand that a stop be put to the skinning. He is no longer satisfied to be lulled to sleep for the purpose of being legally robbed. The rags of a political coat fashioned to fit his dead progenitors do not hang well on his broad shoulders. The picture-hero, 'Toothy Ted,' glorifies a 'prosperity for the man with patches on his pants!' Patches are not good enough for Socialists. I am a Socialist, not because I am a 'turncoat,' nor because I want patches on my pants; but because I want a whole new suit of political clothes, made by the scientific economic tailors of our twentieth century needs, and not the ancient reform patches of dead men who lived in the uncultured days of hand tools and hand methods.

"Socialists are horrified at war and the prospects of war, terming it murder and a relic of barbarism. But these old boiler-plate speliers—these 'saviors' of the nation—grow purple in the face while 'viewing with alarm' the 'dangerous' doctrines of us human coral-workers, whom they are pleased to term 'dreamers,' and 'visionary impossibilists!' How your manly chests swell with an inherited family pride when you listen to these old whiskey-logged procurers lavishing their abundant praises on this 'grand Rep(hic)ublican form o'

gov'ment—th' greatest, most glo(hic)rious, most pow'ful 'n most prosp'rrous (hic) gov'ment under th' starry can(hic)opy of high (hic) Heaven! ”

While his masters were laying the wires to buy his “election” to the Senate, Bol-liver, of “Ahowa,” was freighted through that country on a speaking tour. Standing on an elaborate grandstand covered with colored bunting and built for the occasion in front of the Hilton Hotel, in Madison, Maine, after delivering himself of a vile tirade of vicious abuse of the “dangerous and troublesome Socialists,” he raised both hands in reverence to a huge American flag stretched clear across the street, and with the yellow froth of uncontrolled anger spurting from his lying lips, hysterically yelled: “I view with alarm the seditious schemes of these dissatisfied traitors to our American institutions. These hair-faced, wild-eyed, red-throated Socialists-Anarchists, these flannel-mouthed free-lovers and destroyers of the home! And I point with pride to Old Glory, whose virtuous, star-spangled folds wave triumphantly over the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave. I point with pride to the fact that the sun never sets where her heroic colors defiantly float; and I point with pride still once again, to the *one million, five hundred thousand graves in the South, as a result of the glori-*

ous victory of the 'Boys in Blue' when the Republican party saved the nation in the early sixties."

Stanley knew the story, and he told them some more just to show that he knew what he was talking about. Bolliver followed his Madison speech with a meeting in Skowhegan the next night, where, as it so happened, James F. Carey, Socialist, member of the Massachusetts Legislature for five consecutive terms, was speaking for the Socialists on the streets. "I will tell you this story precisely as they told it to me," said Lark, "for I would not care to lie about a dead man, especially when the whole truth is too terrible to be told, and too damning to be believed.

"The near-senator Bolliver advanced to the footlights in the crowded Opera House, heroically grabbed a couple of handfuls of imaginary whiskers from the face of an imaginary Socialist agitator immediately in the imaginary front of him, and after a magnificent display of physical dexterity in demolishing the straw terror of his tempestuous brain, he fairly shrieked: 'When the Socialists get their little heads above the grass we will find *adequate means* of successfully dealing with them!'

"A runner reported this intelligence to Comrade Carey on the Public Square, and Carey rested from his speaking long enough to dictate back the following reply:

‘Unfortunately for you and your adequate means, Socialists cannot boast of kinship with such as you who crawl on your bellies through the grass. They are not serpents hiding in the tall grasses to strike the poison fang into the vitals of misled victims. When workingmen become enlightened to their own interests, they will mow down the swales of ignorance, uncovering your foul nests of deceit and corruption. But your heads will be in no immediate danger! Whenever the pollypod of deception and false teaching has been leveled, the only visible sign of you will be the pollution and bones you have left behind and the holes where you will have burrowed in to shed your scaly yellow skins.’

“Senator Bolliver is now peacefully resting from his fruitless labors, while the grass grows rank and green above his harmless clay, and the terrible Socialists continue to spread their ‘seditious’ doctrines in increasing volume, and Jim Carey is still on the job.”

Then he told them more about governments, and how that every so-called Republic was only a Monarchy under another name. “We have the American Autocracy,” he said, “the most absolute tyrannical monarchy that ever rode the backs of a subjugated people. We are ruled not by a *king*, but by *the kings!*”— the Kings of Coin.

From this he took them all through the long list of Monarchies, Republics, and religious dictatorships that had ruled the world from the days of the Tree People before Adam, to our present cliff-dwelling civilization in our skyscraped and sewer-slummed Injunction Republic. He told them of the family groups, banded together for self-protection from wild animals; of the communal groups banded together for protection and self-interest against the hostile groups of other tribes; of the invention of fire, of money, religion, and dictatorial power. Up over the long, painful staircase of time he led them, step by step, through every successive stage of civilization, showing the many changes and revolutions that had come and gone in the slow process of evolutionary progress. He told them that man had progressed, not because, *but in spite of, his governments, his religions, and his "friends."*

“All governments were enforced forms of slavery,” he told them. “Government began when the first male brute bit, clawed and lorded it over his female mate. Then came the battle against nature for food, when the strong enslaved the weak as burden bearers and tillers of the soil. The biggest hairy brute in the group enslaved all the lesser hairy brutes, weighting their heads down with yokes of wood to keep

them from running away, and clubbing them to their tasks or to death as pleased his savage fancy.

“But the colony grew and the slaves multiplied, and then came the subordinate officers—the lesser chiefs appointed by the greater—the lieutenants, police, soldiers or whatever you are pleased to call them. Anyway, they had stayed with us, and the system of slavery had stayed with us. The difference between then and now being in degree and method only. Then it was a hairy beast-man, nude, going authoritatively among the workers with a rude club, prodding here and braining there, and taking orders from a more fearful beast-man higher up.

“Now it is a smooth-shaven man-beast, garbed in a blue uniform, going among workingmen with a neatly turned and nicely polished ‘big-stick,’ a tin label pinned over his yellow heart to show that he carries a license to kill, clubbing heads or yoking the hands with iron handcuffs, hanging them with ropes or shooting and gutting them with muskets and bayonets as the case may be. The former was a crude, and wasteful barbarism—crude because undeveloped, and wasteful because slaves were few and hard to hold. The present system being simply a more refined and scientific barbarism, with thousands of years of improvement in method, and a

thousand times more cruel than the old. Then a rebellious slave was crashed to earth, roasted and eaten; now he is 'black-listed,' discharged and turned loose to starve. Then slaves were hunted and driven into pitfalls, yoked and watched day and night to prevent their escape; now they are advertised for in the newspapers and often a riot call has to be rung in for the police to keep them from mobbing their masters for a job of work!

"And then money was invented.

"Beautiful shells and pretty pearls—these were the first 'medium of exchange.' Added to which came horns, skins, bones and a thousand devices and implements of both use and beauty. Upon this coinage of the realm were engraved the first images, pictures and heiroglyphics, and thus 'Art' was born. It was not Art for Art's sake, for it was done by slaves who found favor with the beast-man-higher-up, and so the 'government' stamp was placed on the tribal specie. This form of human exploitation is still in vogue, only in a more fraudulent and intensified degree. In those days a shell was a shell. Now, a dollar is 63 cents and they may not be scraped up generously on the sea shores.

"Out of all this, stealing, and diverse forms of grand and petty robbery—legal and illegal—evolved, as a result of which the land is filled today with those boasted

'free institutions' of which we hear so much—the great American bull pen, or penitentiary, the poorhouse, insane asylum, the 'free lunch,' and the potter's field.

"On the heels of money came religion.

"Of course! Neither could have existed long without the other, and so, when lightning accidentally struck among the slaves one day killing the most unruly and rebellious of them, God was invented. It was an invention by man destined to serve the double purpose of creating that time-honored institution known as the 'Divine Right of Kings,' and to foster superstition and ignorance in the slave, through fear of the Great Hot Noise, whose control, through the benevolence of the Great Noisemaker, henceforth was to reside in the hands of the Big Chief, Hairy Beast-Man!

"Governments have improved much since the days of the wooden slave yoke," the big Texan told them. "But they have ever been governments by the masters for the enslavement of the slaves. The masters never needed any governing. They were always above government—*they were the government!* Without masters there could be no slaves, and without slaves the masters would have to work and earn their own living like honest people. The masters were always agreed—class-conscious, as it were—and never fell out except through jealousy or greed, and then they proceeded

patriotically, to set their slaves to fighting on the 'glorious field of battle!'

"The United States Government was formed by plutocrats," he told them. "They were the sporadic embryo of a multiplicity of money-kings, which money-kings were to rule this nation as no monarchy was ever ruled before. There was not a working-man among them. It was not a majority rule, but a *minority* rule they established. The Declaration of Independence was fine-sounding phraseology; but the Constitution was a document drawn up and signed by pirates and smugglers, and the Supreme Court was simply the kennel of Wall Street, whose watch dogs were there to guard stolen goods and growl back the people from the gate whenever they menaced the Money-Bags.

Then he asked them if they had ever read "The Spirit of the American Government," by J. Allen Smith. Also he wanted to know of them, if they had ever heard of Kirkpatrick, and his "War—What For?" But, as nobody scratched, he kept firing away until, finally, Bert Tarbarrel, the Hinklyville bully and Democrat ward heeler for Slab City, courageously challenged: "How about Thomas Jefferson? Tell us about him. Wasn't he the greatest Democratic statesman—or any other statesman for that matter—that ever lived?"

“Possibly,” circumvented the wary Texan, “and he might easily have qualified as a preacher, or even a priest,” he added, naively. “Among the many great statesmanlike proclivities accredited to Jefferson,” he explained, “was his Platonic love of the negro. Especially Platonic seems to have been his avidity for the carbon-skinned aboriginal of the feminine gender. He so loved the odoriferous wench that he wept regretfully on his *deathbed* that there was no surety, under the Slave Code, that his beautiful mulatto daughters would not be ‘coerced’ and sold on the auction block into the rice swamps, or at the ‘harem price!’ Of course, Thomas Jefferson was a white man. But the mother of his mulatto children was a negress, as black as the ace of spades and as oily and effluvious as a university donation from John D. Rockefeller.

“Yes, Jefferson was a great man,” he concurred. “He penned this declaration: ‘All men are created equal.’ Also, he seems to have done all he could paternally to live up to that declaration. As further evidence—if any were needed—that Thomas Jefferson was a great and good man, besides being the common-law husband of a negro slave and the father of a whole nest of little black slavelings, he is still accredited—in some quarters—with being the

illustrious sire of the Democratic jackass and the despairing refuge of the few fragmentary derelicts of that decadent Jeffersonian Democracy, whatever that may mean. If this doesn't answer your question," tantalized the merciless iconoclast, "dig up a copy of 'The American Slave Code' (suppressed), by William Goodell, turn to page 375 and read how this same Thomas Jefferson waited until death-struck to pen a clause in his last will and testament, conferring freedom on his *own mulatto offspring—his own flesh and blood*—so far as the Slave Code permitted him to do, and 'humbly' imploring the legislature of Virginia to confirm the bequests, 'with permission to remain in the state, where their families and connections are'—then dying under such a cloud of shame and uncertainty."

Ashworth was a Republican town. That settled it! Bert Tarbarrel, ex-factory slave driver, gambler, town blaggard and beater-up of defenseless country boys, had met his Waterloo. The crowd hooted him out of the hall, and when the "Shoofly" from Boston slowed up at that place on its midnightly run through the New Hampshire hills to Canada, a dark form swung on to the blind baggage and was pulled into the night, never to return.

"Socialists are not necessarily better men, but they know more. They know

some of the vital things of life. Some of the things they know are so! They know what they want, and they are the only people in the world who do. They know that you want the same conditions that they want; but you don't know that. They know how to get the things for all men that they know all men want; but your ignorance is in the way, and they know they can accomplish the regeneration of the world only after a majority have come to know what they know. They know that they are slaves, and that they are being 'divided up' from the product of their labor. This knowledge has resulted in their becoming unwilling slaves. They are not 'satisfied with their lot!' They haven't a lot. They have only a little! That's because they belong to the working class. The working class creates a lot, but owns a little. It's only those who create little that own a lot. The less one creates under Capitalism, the more he may own. The capitalist creates nothing and owns everything. That's because you *believe* something that isn't true. You *believe* you are free and independent citizens.

"You *believe* that you are all equal before the law, and that every boy born in America has an equal chance to become President of the United States (I suppose all at the same time)! You hear this from the moment you are a pip in the shell to

the day when they fold your calloused hands and send you back to the potato patch for the count. It comes to us from every point of the compass: the school-room, the pulpit, the newspaper, the public library, the courts and the fireside: 'This is the greatest government that ever was, ever ought to be, ever can be, anywhere at any time for anybody!' That's what you tell me when I come to you with the great truths of Socialism, and as long as your masters succeed in making you *believe* that each of you is a sovereign individual, his warm seat between your shoulders is secure. *He* doesn't believe this, and that's why he doesn't like a Socialist.

"You tell me the reason the capitalists have all the money is because they have the brains. That's right! That's the only time you ever tell a Socialist the truth. This is not because you are dishonest and prefer to misrepresent the facts in the case, but it's because you don't know any better. The reason the capitalist has more brains than the working man is because the capitalist develops his own brains, and uses them in his own interest. The capitalist works with his brain! You workers spend all your time developing your hands, and when you need brains you use your master's! If you used your own brains your masters would have to use their hands.

This would never do, for then, who would there be to hire you?!!!

“Without some one to own our jobs and to drive us to work, tell us when we are so tired we cannot work any longer, and to take away from us eighty-three dollars out of every one hundred we have created, we would all starve to death! That’s clear enough, isn’t it?

“This earth was here when we came. (We will not quarrel at this time over how it came to be here, we will go to Science for the answer to that question.) The earth was of no value until man came out of it to possess it. Values were created when man saw that he had to exercise his muscles or starve. Nothing was of value in the earth until man fried his sweat under the burning sun and maimed his manly beauty in his crude efforts to stay alive. In the early struggles of this bipedaled god, when, with his big stick in hand, he strode forth into the jungle for food, it is not recorded that he encountered signs reading: ‘Keep off the grass, private property,’ etc. Neither is there mention made in any of the literature, or the public press of that time, of meat trusts, oil trusts, or any other trusts or distrusts to bribe legislators and poison the race with adulterated foods. Nor had the divorce court become a necessary adjunct to the heaven-ordained institution of matrimony. All

these and many other great, and munificent inventions have come to us as a result of the 'confidence' which those who do all the useful work have placed, with such guileless faith, in the confidence games of others who work the workers by the splendid work they do with their brains!.

"You want to know what Socialism is. There is no such thing in all the world; and the places where Socialism has been tried and failed exist only in the fertile imagination of such asses and liars as the Boy Orator of the Platt, and Tse Ted, the hero of Pot Hill.

"Socialism is the offspring of Capitalism. It could not have existed prior to Capitalism, and cannot exist with it. They are two distinct systems, and are diametrically opposed to one another. If you would know what Socialism is—to be, you must first know what Capitalism *is*. Without this knowledge thoroughly-digested, Socialism were impossible of your comprehension.

"How many of you can tell me what Capitalism *is*? You have lived under its iron sway all your lives, ever since the invention of machinery came to displace hand labor; and not one of you can tell me one of its fundamental principles. You may be excused in this, for the truth is, that it has *no* principle. That is why the old parties stand for it. If it had any prin-

ciple the Republican and Democratic parties would not be wholly unprincipled. But Capitalism possesses one redeeming virtue: it is absolutely selfish, and operates entirely in self-interest. When you workers get wise to the game, you will get into that game, and then the rotten old system will fall before you in one round.

“Capitalism is a system of murder and robbery, legalized and made respectable by law, and inflicted on the many by the few. Its beneficiaries are few, but its votaries are many. Under its codes the minority rule the majority, while the majority have no voice or power. This remarkable state of affairs is manipulated through the deception of what is misnamed ‘representation.’ The minority who own everything, nominate all the candidates for office, and the majority who own nothing vote them into power, pay their salaries, only to be promptly robbed by them to fatten the purses of their masters—the minority. This is called ‘representative government’! This is requiring an intelligent person to exercise a phenomenal stretch of generous imagination; but, somehow, you accomplish the remarkable feat year after year, and never tumble!

“It is said that a chain is as strong as its weakest link; and that beggars get all they deserve. Who shall say that such a ‘representative’ government is not as rep-

resentative as is deserved by a people who will fight each other to perpetuate it?

“Surely such a magnanimous and aspiring people ought not to be molested in the possession and enjoyment of what they vote for!

“You have voted for poverty for yourselves and you’ve got it. You have voted for plenty for your masters and they’ve got it. You have voted for hell and we’re all in it! But I don’t like it, and I want to get out of it. That’s one reason why I am a Socialist.

“As I said before, you ought to have what you voted for, and you’ve got it; but I did *not* vote for it, yet have it, and must suffer the tortures of hell along with ninety millions of others who did not vote for it. It is a beautiful situation wherein almost a hundred millions of innocent men, women and children have to surrender their individuality, prostitute their manhood and womanhood, maim their flesh and bones in the mills and marts of wage-slavery, for the folly of a handful of honest, but deluded voting, unthinking, toiling serfs.”

Under the scathing arraignment of their pet political systems the shyster lawyer Jibbs, and the coterie of political hybrids, including Editor Happyman, of the *Aberrant*, Sheriff Larding, and old Ben Eastern, the local land pirate, became almost livid with inburning rage. From the tre-

mendous applause that frequently interrupted his sledge-hammer flailings, it could plainly be seen that the crowded house was with him to a man, save for a dozen or so of those smoothly groomed gentlemen in the front rows, who owned the town, body and soul, and who had "taken in" the Socialist meeting partly for a joke, and partly to start a fight in which the meeting was to be broken up and the local organization demoralized and driven out of town. It had all been arranged in advance, and was to come off on schedule time, just as the speaker was winding up his discourse.

The gray-haired hermit of Tannerhill Hill had several times been seen to clap his hands furiously, and actually shout, "Hurrah for the Socialists!" as the Texas hercules hurled his stinging rebuke into the very teeth of the leader of the Republican Ring, who, on more than one occasion, had tried to confuse him. And Leland Tannerhill was known to be a Republican! No man could accuse him of ever having been a "turncoat," but here he was, seated on the rostrum with a half-dozen common town laborers—all Socialists—and wildly approving the "ranting harangue of a flannel-mouthed agitator!"

"It is hard to tell," resumed the Southerner, "what Socialism *is*, there being none; but it is not hard to foresee what it will be. Socialism will be an operative plan of

co-operative ownership among men, of the publicly used necessities of human life. It will be an Industrial Democracy.

“Capitalism is the antithesis, or opposite of public ownership. Its very life depends on the competitive traffic in the collectively used wealth of the nation. Capitalism is private ownership and exploitation of the common property of the people. It may legally and lawfully be engaged in by any individual who can steal enough money to go into the business. This is done for private profit at public expense. Socialism would not permit this individual robbery of the Public. Only the Public itself would be in business, and then only for the Public Good, and not for private profit. Not only is Capitalism a system of private ownership and exploitation of public utilities, but the whole list of private necessities is included in its monopoly on human life. Capitalism is, everything for profit; Socialism will be, everything for use. Socialism would have the people own the government; Capitalism is ownership of the people by the government. Under Capitalism, a political tool who plans the blowing up of a battleship with its sleeping crew, may become President of the nation; under Socialism, there will be no battleships to blow up and no especial glory could come from shooting an unarmed banana boy in the back. Socialism will not be what some

cunning, confessed murderer and his private retinue of lawless understrappers deign to make it; *it will be what is demanded by organized society.*

“Man is a social animal.

“Under Capitalism, society is supposed to be the reflex of some touted individual in public life. Therefore, when a great killer succeeds in killing his way into the chief magistracy of the executive service, everybody buys a gun, the teeth are worn ‘open-face,’ and Sunday-school children march to church in uniform, a bible under one arm and a shotted rifle on the other! This is the religion of Jesus Christ under this Twentieth Century ‘reign of terror!’ It says to the ‘sinner’: ‘Read this book and do as I say, or I’ll blow hell out of you!’ This is said to be ‘Individualism,’ and under its ‘patriotic’ influences life becomes an option between ‘race suicide,’ and race murder!

“Under Socialism, the individual will be the reflex of Society, and Society will be the reflex of its emancipated and reawakened will.

“You want to know how Socialism is going to ‘work.’ In God’s name, tell me how Capitalism works? Socialism will not work, *it will be worked by Society.* Capitalism works, all right. It ‘works’ both the individual and Society!

“It is said, ‘a carpenter may be known by his chips, as well as by the structure he

builds.' Capitalism has built your modern society; look at its handiwork! It is a house of ill-fame. Look at the 'chips' of its builders! They are fifty millions of human wrecks, festering in ignorance and poverty. A race disinherited on an opulent earth. Do you think Socialism—or any other 'ism' could beat that?"

"So you p'ose t' (hic) equalize everybody 'n bring all to a dead level, 'n pull a white man down to the same plane with a (hic) nigger, 'eh ?'" drawled out Lawyer Berrill, Chairman of the Republican Town Committee, who had evidently been holding back to sober up for this grand and decisive blow. This caused a stir among the other members of the gang, and Stanley Lark knew there was mischief in the wind. He buttoned his coat and drew his tall figure up to its full height, and looking the old wolf squarely in the face, replied: "When Socialists advocate a system so peaceful as not to require an army and navy to force it down the throat of Society, they are accused of being 'anarchists' and 'inciting to violence!' When Socialists aver that every man and woman should be so prosperous and secure in life as to enable them to marry the love of their choice and rear a happy family without fear of hard times and poverty, they are accused of being 'free lovers,' with a desire to 'break up the home!' When Socialists affirm the inalienable right of every

human creature to work at useful labor with a guarantee that the full value of the product of their toil shall be theirs to be enjoyed by them, they are charged with being 'dead-levelers,' whatever that may mean.

"There is nothing in the Socialist program to interfere with your chances of becoming just as good as the blackest negro that ever wet-nursed a millionaire, or spilled sweat in a white man's soup. In the North you go to school with them, work with them, and vote with them. In Washington your President eats with them. In the army and navy you fight with them, and in the South you sleep with them. Take your wife out and show her the little yellow faces that mingle with the white faces of her own children in the streets. Then accuse us Socialists of advocating 'race equality,' and warn the black man against Socialism because it promises him an honest job of work!"

At this last, the crowd went fairly wild. Everybody knew old Berrill, the man that Jim Carey had handled so unmercifully in a debate over in Skowhegan, and the cheering at his discomfiture by another Socialist was long and hearty. Amid such shouts as, "That's right," "Hurrah for Socialism," "We're with you," etc., "Monkey" and "Dutchy" Boston, two Old Town gamblers and theatrical baggage thieves, now members of the Republican "Ring," arose, and crowding their way to the footlights, shook



"Swish! the whip cut the air. The bully came to four hours
later in the hospital!"

their fists at the smiling Texan. "Dutchy," a two-hundred-pound bully, who had once traveled with a leg-show, as bouncer on the door, bawled out so loud that all could hear above the confusion: "Youze aughtter be hosswhipped, ye Panhandle hayseed!" Tossing him a silver dollar in full view of the vast audience, and without the slightest show of anger, the speaker exclaimed: "It is an experience I have never enjoyed, brother; here is a dollar—it will buy a good whip."

The bruiser took Stanley at his word. Out of the hall he tore, to return five minutes later with a long horsewhip. The crowd was on its feet now, and no one saw the shyster lawyer Gibbs when he slunk out by a rear exit. Boston sprang upon the stage. Swish! the whip cut the air! * * * The bully came to four hours later in the hospital!

Pandemonium reigned! Sheriff Larding drew his revolver and was in the act of shooting, when Rec Cotton sprang upon him like a panther and bore him down. Leland and the Texan both rushed forward simultaneously to disarm the drunken sheriff, when there was a crash of glass from one of the windows! The next instant a blood-stained stone ricochetted from a hoary temple and bounded across the stage to the proscenium. Leland Tannerhill uttered a groan, staggered backward and fell at full length on the floor!

CHAPTER VII.

MIND, THE MASTER.

Rebellious at his fettered task,
At break of dawn Pierian—
Nor master sought his leave to ask—
Arose a slave—a god—a man!

Quimby Sands, so rumor had it, was not an obedient child. Not that he was an incorrigible, but having ideas, as all healthy children will, he early began to think original thoughts and to do things in his own original way. This was accredited to a “stubborn will” by the knowing ones, and when the minister paid his regular monthly visit, they would shake their heads with melancholy gravity and predict all kinds of dire calamity for any community where town “poppers” held their heads so high! The good minister said that probably he was “spunky,” and that his “spirit would have to be broken!” This spirit-breaking process was frequently undertaken, and very assiduously persisted in by means of the ox-goad, and cowhide routes; but the uncowed son-of-his-father developed spine instead of hinges in his neck, and when the pious sages reached what looked like either the “breaking” point or death, the clear hazel eyes of the unconquered boy would flash a challenge

of defiance in the teeth of his torturers, for he was the son of Jason Sands.

He was a healthy boy, and he loved the country with its wooded hills and grassy meadows. He loved the wild flowers and the running streams and the songs of the thrushes and the bobolinks; and all the wild things that moved shyly and noiselessly through the dank mosses of the deep forests. But he hated work. He wondered why the kindhearted farmers who lived among all these rare beauties never loved them. He knew they did not, for they never talked of them and only talked of work, and money; and the rough tasks meted out to him he shrank from with loathing.

Rock picking among the sharp stubble when the fingers would bleed and the back ache, was distasteful to him. The filthy chores among the cattle and hogs around the tumble-down barn; the slow and unhandy method of doing things after the manner of their grandfathers; all these crude, wasteful and unscientific struggles with simple nature he hated; and in his progressive child-mind he marveled that older men did not find out other ways to make the work a lighter burden.

Fatherless and motherless, he had none to protect and advise him; and with the kicks and cuffs of strangers hurrying through the world, he was buffeted from

place to place until he fetched up in the streets of Boston, a green country boy ten years old, with a two-dollar suit of clothes, cowhide boots and an empty stomach.

It was here that, after starving for days in the streets, he learned to sell papers and shine shoes. Later, he "suped" in the theaters, and it was discovered that he possessed a voice of great quality, and he learned to sing. Also he secured a place in a grocery and provision store in the Back Bay, where he worked long hours for three dollars a week. Over an oil lamp in his attic room at No. 10 Grotton street, which room cost him one dollar a week, he cooked his simple food when his long day was done; and from the balance of his meager wage, together with the fifty cents per night for "suping" (which was sometimes really paid him), he managed meanly to live and to continue his daily round of hustle, over-worked and half-starved though he was.

Moreover, he learned to save, even from this scanty income; and out of his saving fund he dressed himself neatly, if a three-dollar suit of shoddy store clothes may be said to be neat, and bought old books from the "second-hand man" around the corner.

But fourteen hours a day for three dollars a week began to make him think, after a long time, and when he mustered up pluck enough to think out loud in the presence of his boss, the store raised his pay.

With another whole dollar every week added to his former three, he bought some white pocket handkerchiefs of the seven-for-a-quarter quality from a faker on the street, and some fifty cent under-flannels—the first he had ever worn. Also he bought more and better books.

He read everything he could lay hands on; for nothing seemed right in all the world, and he felt that somewhere in some of the vast porridge of printed things that great men had said, there must be told the reason for so much apparent useless wrong.

He used to read the Holy Bible to the old people on the farm before running away, and he knew it almost by heart. He had read it through twice before he was ten years of age, it being his nightly task to read a chapter to them, because their sight was poor. But that was a long time ago, he decided, and he would be fair, now that he had gained what was said to be his independence. So he began by rereading the Holy Bible, and soon became filled with great wonder and desire. The whole of his young life had been spent among pious church folk, and he had always attended and loved his Sunday-school; but here were whole chapters in God's Holy Book from which no minister he knew had ever drawn a text, and he wondered why. But in his note book he took down a few quotations from Jeremiah 25, 27-28; Isaiah 63:6; Ex.

THE TORCH OF REASON.

21, 2-8, 20-21; 2 Thess. 2, 11; Deut. 14, 21; Gen. 16, 1-4; Gen. 19, 30-37; Gen. 30, 1-22; Gen. 38; 2 Sam. 11, 2-6; Ezek. 14, 9; 1 Kings 22, 20-23; Luke 14, 26; Luke 12, 51; Mat. 10, 34-35; Jer. 48, 10; Deut. 20, 16-17; Num. 31, 17-18; Num. 33, 52-55; Deut. 2, 24-25-34; Deut. 3, 3-6; Josh. 6, 2-21; Josh. 8, 18-28; Josh. 12, 24; Matt. 10, 34; Ps. 137, 9; Isa. 13, 15-18; Nah. 3, 10; Zach. 14, 2; Hosea 13, 16; 2 Sam. 12, 15-18; Lev. 26, 22; Ex. 20-5; Col. 3, 18; Col. 2, 8; 1 Cor. 8, 1; Eccl. 1, 18; 1 Cor. 4, 10; 1 Cor. 14, 38; Rev. 22, 11; Rev. 12; Rom. 13, 1-3, and numerous others. The source from whence men's prejudices arose had always puzzled him, but it puzzled him no more. And when he had read these Scriptures over three times more, he knew that he was no hero, and he blamed the preachers no more. In after years he often thanked the day when he resolved to reread the Scriptures, and he regretted not that he had paid a dime for this Holy Bible at the old second-hand man's.

Into the sciences next he delved, and the errors he unearthed among the works of the so-called great professors astounded him, child though he was.

In his old geography he remembered of having read that coal was the prehistoric deposit of infusorial vegetation that had fallen from the bottom of floating islands in lakes! To verify this supposed informa-

tion he snatched a lump of it from the first coal-wagon he saw passing in the streets, and from experiments covering many years, but which were ever persistently pursued, he discovered that coal was simply solidified, liquified wood. Even the insects and animals were maligned and lied about. And when he made one shocking discovery after another to the effect that all the simplest fundamentals of common, everyday things were either not known or else ignored, feared, or misunderstood, how hardly shall we censure him for coming to doubt the orthodox theory of organic life?

Spencer and Darwin were not dry reading for this intellectual glutton. He learned much from them. They were not altogether right, but they were on the right track. Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Lombroso were geniuses; but he criticized them all, and when he had read Ibsen, Nordau, Kant, Ward and Carlyle, he began to realize life as it had not appealed to him before.

He loved Voltaire and Tom Paine. The one for his great bravery, and the other for his great honesty. Huxley came in for his share of glory, also for criticism, and Hegel he devoured with painstaking relish, after which, and in spite of himself, he found himself reading the Apocryphal mythologies, and everything beyond and in between, from lightning-worship to

Christ, and from theology subdued to the "divine right of dividends."

After five years of ceaseless work and constant study, he began to feel growing into him a great longing for strange sights and things other than those of the daily grind. He was fifteen, now, and from all the hundreds of volumes he had read he had acquired a vast wealth of knowledge. Great men had lived in the world, and some of them had left great books behind them; but there was nothing awe-inspiring about any of these, and the wonders of lay conventionality had long since lost their power to charm this untamed spirit of rebellion.

Quimby Sands was a wonderful boy. The common studies were a waste of time with him. Tobacco, intoxicating drinks and degenerate associations he shunned as a pestilence. With the increase of his pay from four dollars a week for the second six months, to twelve dollars a week at the end of five years, he had moved into better quarters, employed a private teacher twice a week, dressed in the best style and saved several hundred dollars. More than once he shocked his teachers by cutting rough-shod across lots to the conclusion of some seeming deep problem, giving the answer ere the trained scholar completed the entangling plot. He soon made the remarkable discovery that he knew more than his instructors, who could not endure the

humiliation of being corrected in their long drawn-out meanderings through pages of figures for a result a mere boy could achieve with a single, lightning-like flash of the brain. This he could do, and without pencil or chalk. There was something wrong with the systems of education. This was an important discovery and he would read more and try to find out the causes of things.

After thousands of years, some one had made the unpopular discovery that the world was round. A thing he knew the first time he went in swimming! For giving this valuable astronomical information to the world, the genius who had dared to announce it served fourteen years in prison as his reward! Galileo was his name, and the reason he was imprisoned was that his philosophy upset the orthodox theory of Society, which society, singularly enough, held that the world was flat!

In the so-called Natural Histories the skunk was described as being capable of "throwing" his fetid fluid by some unexplained skunkesque flip of the tail, and there the marvelous explanation ended. This lie everybody parroted and the skunk, the farmers' best friend, was hunted and killed wherever found. He knew the story was a lie; for was he not born on the same farm with hundred of these little friends? As a matter of fact the skunk being an animal which feeds upon natural vermin,

did nothing offensive if left unmolested in his nightly quest for food; but he possesses a perfect double-barrel atomizer, and when attacked, and in self-defense, is able to spray a small circle in his immediate vicinity with the aforesaid fetid fluid, and without spilling a particle of the fluid on himself, the tail playing no part in the performance, whatsoever.

From elaborate colored plates there were printed pictures of snakes in the act of climbing trees by winding their bodies around the trunks! How silly! And the lazy, "z-ee, z-ee" buzz of the locust in the tree-tops, as he opened and shut the trap-door of his wonderful sounding-box to variate the music of his vibratory snare-drums, they said was the working of some inexplicable function of the wings! They were a lot of old fossils who went on the theory that all things were always exactly as they are, arriving at conclusions from cursory investigations, at best. Or else their deductions were based on the dead and unscientific data of other old fossils who had dipped their pens in the mystic fog of superstition, charging the mystery of all natural phenomena above their ossified understanding together with each eonian epoch to the "frivolous wrath of an avenging God!"

However this all might be, Quimby Sands, while yet a sapling youth, knew that

the world had accepted as fact much that was untruth and great misinformation. If the wise men would lie and display this ignorance so unmercifully about these little things of which any farmer boy might become informed, what might be expected of them when it came to the big problems of our social and political life!

From the very beginning all he had heard was: "Have faith and believe, don't ask questions, believe and believe it; have faith and don't doubt it!" But he had doubted, and they had planted doubt in his heart the very moment they commanded him to believe, and so he became an investigator.

Next, he fell upon the histories; the encyclopedias, and their government records, devouring them greedily. They were horrors—simply *HORRORS!* If the lies of the "scientists" had nettled him, what of his shame and disgust of these brutal incarnations of fiendish inhumanity among men! He found the histories—so-called—simply the printed accounts of bloody deeds of "war heroes." From cover to cover these horror books reeked with nothing but the red and stench, the blast and roar, the groans and ruin of the "glorious" battle-field. Pictures in many colors there were, of the hurricane of shot and shell, when the blistering flare of the red-throated cannon vomited hell-fire into the blue and grey-garbed breasts of the sons of workingmen.

Here was a double-page plate in four colors said to be the "faithful" reproduction of a certain great General's "glorious" victory over another General—presumably less great! Judging it from its color scheme alone, it were a beautiful picture. It was a work of art worthy of a better cause. What both impressed and shocked the boy most was the artistic and ever-persistent attempt at the portrayal of this bloody thing, "glory."

Seated upon a beautiful white charger in the foreground, his right hand, from which a broken saber is seen falling, raised heroically above his head, is pictured a splendid specimen of physical manhood. He wears the hated grey! On his manly head—now thrown back painfully in the throes of death—rests a plumed *chapeau*, and from the middle of his back, dripping crimson from its sharp point, protrudes a foot of polished steel.

Just fronting this white charger, and prancing majestically with fore feet in air, a magnificent black stallion champs a foaming bit, bearing a gaunt rider in the Northern blue. The bullet-like head is hatless, showing an ugly red gash from the stroke of a saber, reaching from eye through a cleft ear and losing itself far behind in the scrubby hair. The shabby blue uniform fits sloppily over the brawny hulk. The teeth are gnashed together inside a diabolical



“He found the histories—so-called—simply the printed accounts
of bloody deeds of war heroes!”

grin which matches splendidly the devilish gleam of murder in the bloodshot eye.

The background of this picture is nothing if not a cyclonic confusion of cannon smoke, flying limbs and arms, splashing brains and spurting gore, with myriads of fight-drunk madmen slashing at each other's throats and blindly rushing headlong upon bayonet and sword.

Over this turmoil of Christian diabolism, and with staffs leaning aggressively toward each other is pictured two mottled symbols of soiled fabric waving and being waved and flaunted in the demoniacal visages of these insane, unsane, inhuman idiots.

The handsome white charger, jammed back on his haunches, is being seized by the bridle by a half-naked negro. Spattered all over his immaculate side is to be seen the red brains of a young infantry-man in grey, whose headless body is crumpling up in the act of falling across the stomach of a wounded comrade.

Into the mouth and throat of another wounded soldier, whose eyes are squirting from their sockets, is planted the right hind hoof of the prancing black steed of the victorious blue. Reaching his long arm far forward, the "heroic" rider is in the act of pushing four feet of crooked steel straight through the middle of his unfortunate brother in grey. It was beautiful! It was grand! It was Heavenly!

What a splendid sight! What an inspiration, he thought, to the "Toy Scouts," a Christian organization among children and fostered by every church for the purpose of teaching boys the Heaven-hallowed glory of legalized murder. He felt sick and guilty as he read on through the bloody pages of these morbid narratives. And when he had finished without finding anything relating to the useful people of the world, except that they mined all the lead, made all the powder, fashioned all the war implements and then shed all the blood, furnished all the unmarked graves, all the widows and orphans, all the broken homes, all the patriotism but received none of the "glory," he began to wonder what it was all about. Then, by merest accident, he came upon "The History of Civilization." (Julian Laughlin, St. Louis.) At the age of eighteen this Apollonian iconoclast had sailed around the world, had mastered seven languages, excelled in both art and music, and was astonishing the civilized world with his revolutionary inventions and his unorthodox revelations regarding organic life. He had familiarized himself with four thousand different religious creeds, from each of which he learned that every one is going to Hell who does not espouse that very particular creed!

Becoming historically acquainted with one thousand and sixty-seven *only* living Gods, all of whom promised everlasting

damnation to the unbeliever of their *own particular doctrine*, the problem of dodging the fate of the transgressor under such circumstances was the only obstacle to his freedom of thought. So he resolved to leave the damning of souls to the older professionals, while he went into the God business for himself. He would save bodies while they yet had souls in them; for without healthy bodies there could not be souls worth the saving.

Nineteen *only* sons of the *only* living God, he had disinterred in his travels around the world. Jesus Christ being among this list, and all having been crucified by the "rabble." Not for anything they had ever done, but for what they had said that was either misunderstood or else that conflicted with what some one else had said, usually some one who had been dead several thousand years!

He landed in St. Louis during the financial panic of 1907, when four hundred policemen were stationed in the basements of the several banking institutions, armed to the teeth, and with orders to shoot to kill should a "run" be started by the depositors. "John Smith" and "John Doe" cheques were the only available medium of exchange, which cheques were simply so much white paper, and as worthless as gummed labels so far as real value was concerned. The money of the people had all

been stolen or hoarded by the big gamblers, and when the bottom fell out of their watered stock speculation grafts, their "confidence" in each other's confidence games played out, and money was said to be "tight!"

Up to this time he had never met a Socialist, knew little of them, and less of their program. Had he been in touch with the new political economy he would have better understood the causes of panics and why the subtle games of the wily stock robber sometimes fail in the midst of what appears to be a period of "unprecedented prosperity." Also he would have found the real essence of social justice awaiting its application to modernized civilization.

He had his hard-earned money in the Missouri Valley Trust Co., and when that bank refused to honor his draft for fifty dollars, he called on the president, one Mr. Reckonbridge Bones, who flatly admitted to him the unlawful practices of his institution, pleading guilty to it, and going to the limit of unreason by declaring such refusal to be an act of outlawry, he wanted to know what in hell there was going to be done about it! The words of the smug banker riled the honest youth. He was angry, and he could feel the hot blood rushing into his face at the defiance of the old villain who was literally holding him up as a wayfarer is held up by a highwayman. There was a

scene, which wound up by the cheque being honored and o. k.'d by the president, the same Mr. Reckonbridge Bones.

No! young Sands was not arrested! On the contrary, he was invited into the private office of the chiefs, where he was promised every consideration in the future, profound regrets having been expressed at the "slight misunderstanding that had just eventuated!"

This was his first jolt. This was what a great banking house could do to the Public! This was what the police were for, then! "Still Bill" gave the snap away to him later, after they became acquainted, for Bill was a Socialist Cop, and said he didn't give a damn who knew it.

Quimby Sands had gotten his first real slap in the face by the Mailed Fist of Capitalism. Of course the system had hit him before, but not openly and in broad daylight. It came as a revelation to him. It made him think, and in the thinking, he thought the thoughts of the rebel and his eyes saw red.

Who were these bankers, anyway? How came they to be so rich and powerful? How was it that in the soft hands of these rich rascals resided so much power? Around the corner in his great red touring car spun Ann Souser Brush, the South Side suds maker. His car had just killed a man! Why was he not arrested? Why didn't

the panic hit him? Then there was Francis R. Golliah, the multimillionaire tax dodger and apostate to the public confidence, calling for a thousand dollars in *gold!*

These, and others, were some of the rebel thoughts that came trooping through his brain. He saw the people starving. What was meant by "hard times?" Why did that big furniture house fail? Why did the Goosie-Rottenhimer Shoe Factory shut down? What were panics for, and why were they permitted in a Republic?

These things began to interest him. Theology had interested him—mighty; but theology treated of things after death. Here was life, and the problems of life. These things were *here* and *now!* They were *real!* They dealt with man's means of life here on earth, and while he still might be alive. Funny the school books never taught about these things! Somebody was running the government, and it wasn't run right. Who was at the head of things, anyway? The bankers seemed to be, for the newspapers were full of "finance" and "slump" talk; and there was a whole lot about the tariff, the trusts, religious revivals and how a workingman might live comfortably on six cents a day. To make a long story short, whoever was at the helm were either fools or criminals, sleeping drunkards or raving madmen, and it was time for a change.

They were running things wide open and the country was going to ruin. Whoever it might or might not be, he figured it out that it could not be the fault of labor, for he knew there wasn't a single working man or woman in political office in the country.

In all his studies he had begun at the wrong end of life. That was the fault of the educators. They were paid to teach only what supported the accepted theories, which theories were the pillars of the Ruling Regime. It was beginning to get clear to him—this social and political structure—wherein operated a subtle cleavage of the toiler and his toil's reward. A revolution was fermenting within him. Not from any studied or natural promptings from within, but from the social atmosphere *without*.

Was America a land of the free? It might be “The home of the brave,” for one had to be somewhat brave to live at all; but liberty, as it really existed, consisted of one's ability to stay out of jail! Of *freedom* there was none. Not even freedom of thought. To be a thinker was to be an undesirable citizen; and an intelligent person, if allowed freedom, was a menace to the stability of sound government! Sound government meant the same as sound money. It consisted chiefly of *sound!* This “sound” the working man got, while the Kings of High Finance got the cash!

An intelligent, thinking people were an undesirable quantity in the perpetuation of such a reign, for only through the ignorance of a misled majority could such a pestilential fraud be masqueraded under the guise of Democracy. But here was a mental outlaw who dared to break that law. Here was a mere youth who would defy that law. One who dared to dream, and in the dreaming to create a new—a rebel law!

“And a little child shall lead them.”

So it came to pass that Quimby Sands created, educated and organized “The Cadet Democracy.”

Now the generally accepted interpretation of the term, “cadet,” being “young soldier,” the hair-splitters and jealous fault-finders were on their feet to cry the name down; but after awhile some one with brains and a little moderation looked the word up in Webster’s and found it was from the French, meaning “younger brother.” Then it very naturally swept the country like a cloud burst. Also the Cadet Democrats were copied abroad, and in six months it was a world movement, out of which was born “The International Industrial Democracy.” This latter being an organization of and by the International Socialist Party.

Now the orthodox cadet hopes—some day—to become a great killer of men—at so many dollars per month! But Quimby’s

cadets were different. They comprised the torch and flame of clean young manhood and clean young womanhood of the nation—and the world. They were the very sinew and soul of the universe.

There were no dexterous, one-hand cigarette rollers, crap shooters, or weaklings in the Cadet Democracy. Hollow chests and sallow faces there came into it, but they soon developed spirit, pride, and a manly wholesomeness, that defied weakness; and the hollow chests became full chests; the sallow faces turned to rose-cheeks, and the shiftless, idle boy and languid, tired girl, were quickly transformed into two blossoms of budding health and glowing virility.

The Cadet Democrats had a principle—a principle with a purpose. They were not animated with the blood-thirsty aspirations of the soldier cadet. On the contrary, their function was two-fold, viz.: to draw the deadly charge from the shotted musket of the “Toy Scouts,” and to shoot Socialist propaganda into the plastic brain of every child and youth—male and female—under twenty-one years of age in the nation. For this they were destined to become famous as the “Red Cadets.”

E. G. Lewis, founder and Mayor of University City, creator of the biggest printing establishment in the world and founder of “The American Woman’s League,” and the

“Women’s Democracy,” was not a Socialist, though he was destined to be. He was an honest man, however, and he owned the St. Louis *Evening Moon*. So when the Cadet Democrats were organized and the other newspapers “knocked,” the *Moon* was fair. This aroused the ire of Pulse-squeezer’s *Daily Roast-Besmirch*, whose columns fairly reeked with slanderous vituperation, climaxing by pinning this “red” bouquet on the school children of St. Louis, because they dared to organize for the study of life’s real problems. But Quimby Sands was both alive and alert to the situation, and lost no opportunity to make capital out of any move the enemy might make. He knew it was an intended insult, and his blood boiled; but he sprang into the fight like a young panther; and in a letter to the *Moon*, he told the people why red was the symbol of Socialism, explained why the banner of Jesus was of a “crimson hue,” pointed out that, whereas the blood of all men was red, it proved a common origin and a universal brotherhood. The *Moon* printed the truth, and the fight was over.

The boy did not seek the fight, but once begun he would either win or else go down and out to everlasting defeat. But “defeat” was not in Sands’ vocabulary! And Quimby was the son of his father!

For his conversion to Socialism, this young fire brand gave the credit to Jack

London. Jack had made him think! After reading "THE CALL OF THE WILD," "THE SEA WOLF," and "THE WAR OF THE CLASSES," he fell upon "MY LIFE IN THE UNDER WORLD," "THE IRON HEEL" and "MARTIN EDEN." These were great books. Especially good were the "THE CALL OF THE WILD," "THE IRON HEEL" and "MARTIN EDEN." Other books Jack had written, books by the dozen, including "THE GAME," "BURNING DAYLIGHT" and "THE KEMPTON-WACE LETTERS," this latter being a wonderful love classic.

Jack London, in his estimation, was the greatest living literary genius. Here at last was one man who knew how to write of *life*—life real, and red, and raw. The more he read London, the more he knew of *life*; and the more he knew of life the more he loved life and all mankind. But more than all other men among men did he love Jack London.

* * * * *

The years came and went and the "*Red Cadets*" grew. They were a sure enough organization now. In America there were ten millions of them! Every school was a chapter house, and whenever they wanted new books or new studies, they called a meeting of the School Board and got what

they wanted. If the School Board slept on their mandates they called a strike. O you couldn't fool the kids! Besides, there was "*The Red Cadet*," a juvenile daily newspaper, edited by young Sands and which went to the home of every citizen of the Cadet Democracy; said what it pleased, defiantly challenging the lying old party press to refute it. Nothing could stop the "Red Kids" now. Every mother's son of them wore the beautiful red and gold uniform of the organization on all public occasions, and a handsomer sight was never seen than when at the inauguration of their first president, 20,000 of them, uniformed and equipped for "active service," formed in line and marched to the City Hall in St. Louis. All traffic ceased. The police tried to clear the streets, but were powerless. It was a new one on them! It commanded the respect of the press, and it made the grey beards sit up.

Quimby Sands was an inventive genius. At nineteen he invented the *Comet*, and her phenomenal aerial exploits staggered the world. Also, his name had become famous in every land and stories were written of his creations in every tongue. Presidents entertained him; kings sought him; women worshipped him and the Church feared him! For was he not an "incarnate devil?" Look at his *Red Cadets*!

With the established record of being the greatest inventive genius the world had ever seen, small wonder that capital—unsought—came flowing in on him when he announced to an awakening world his intention to build a sea-going submarine utility ship propelled directly by explosion. The newspapers got hold of it, and every Sunday supplement blazed with four colored cartoons of his prowess with this new fire-propelling engine.

Quimby was young, and when the pledged donations came flooding in upon him to the appalling amount of \$20,000,000, he became, momentarily, overwhelmed with elation. It seemed everybody wanted to give him all the money they had. Everybody wanted to help build the great new "battleship," as they would have it. The world was on its knees at his feet, and of course his fortune was made!

But a thing happened just at this juncture that put him to the crucial test, a test that unmasked the real stuff of him and denuded his grand character of every vestige of capitalistic veneer of which from the sudden association of great wealth he was in danger of becoming enamored. The devilish cunning with which monied men cast their capitalistic bread upon the waters of opportunity was revealed to him with all its subtle charlatanry.

He was in Boston again. In the office of Young's Hotel he was in the act of shaking hands with Copper King Rawson, who had subscribed liberally to the "fire-ship" fund, when a bright-looking lad in a scarlet and gold uniform sidled up and slipped a copy of the "*Red Cadet*" into Rawson's hand. Reporters with their cameras were ever dogging the heels of the great stock gambler, and next morning all the Boston papers carried a double-head quarter-tone of the Rawson-Sands hand-shaking, with the title page of the "*Red Cadet*" plastered all over the picture as clear as a black eye. That settled it! It was Quimby Sands, founder of the "*Red Cadets*," and Socialist agitator, being entertained like royalty by Tom Rawson. That was enough to know about Rawson! He, too, must be a Socialist!

The "*Red Cadet*" was known from Cape Horn to the North Pole, and from the Philippines to Labrador and around the world. Loved by every wholesome boy and girl capable of intelligent reasoning, it was the most popular and widely circulated juvenile magazine on earth. Also it was the most bitterly hated.

"It is all off," phoned the Boston Capitalist that afternoon, "I have stopped payment on that cheque for half a million. You see, I can't afford to have my name connected with you people. And had I

known of your political leanings, you could not have interested me. I am wiring the truth of the deception to the Associated Press, and henceforth I am not to be considered."

One week from that announcement, the entire subscribed fund, with one single exception, had been withdrawn in like manner. The single exception being \$10,000 in gold from one Joe Sworoski, Polish tailor, who had known young Sands when he lived in the attic room on Grotton street. Also, the good old man had loved and befriended him in many ways. Joe was a Socialist; though Quimby up to this point had been unaware of it, and when the boy related the circumstances of the fund retraction meanness to him, the old man shrugged his shoulders and laughed. But he reassured him that all would come out right in the end, and that nothing could prevail to keep him down now that the *common people* had become acquainted with the charge that he was a Socialist.

Here it was, the capitalist mind laid bare. You could not trust them. They were out for the coin, and whenever they loosened up it was only for the purpose of getting a tighter hold. History was full of it—their duplicity—why had he not remembered. They could never fool him again, the cowards!

Five days later he received a long, encouraging letter from the secretary of the National Executive Committee of the Cadet Democracy, promising that if he would write up the Rawson episode for the "*Red Cadet*," that paper would show the money changers what an organized nation of school children could do. Accompanying the letter was a draft for \$5,000, subscribed by the Founders' Key at St. Louis, and the work on the *Agitator* began forthwith.

One year from the insidious slander by the capitalist press that Tom Rawson and the young American wizard, Sands, were plotting to upset the existing social order and establish anarchy, the wonderful new air-burning submarine—the *Agitator*—was launched in the Mississippi River. By this time five thousand "Keys" of the Cadet Democracy had been established in the United States; the school boys and girls of five other countries had placed orders for similar ships; but not a single Foundation of the International Industrial Democrats had as yet been established in the country. "Foundations" there were in varied profusion—foundations of millions of dollars wrung from the faces of the mulcted poor—the Carnegie, Rockefeller and Sage "Foundations," together with the soft-soap Gullet "shaving" device which smelled of Standard Oil—"WORLD CORPORATION."

Fakes and shams there were in abundance; but the United States had been humbugged so long that the Light of Reason was inky midnight; Truth was insanity, and to possess knowledge was to be "bug-house!"

In every other country on the globe the I. I. Ds. were thriving and slowly but surely sucking the vitality out of Capitalism; but they had never been heard of here!

The cruise of the *Agitator* down the Mississippi and around the Horn, including all the island possessions, the visit to Japan for pictures and to the Alaska Coast consumed another whole year; and when father and son met on board the Red Cadet's queer new ship in the far waters of Norton Sound in the year 1910, Quimby Sands had passed the twentieth milestone. He stood erect, a tall, broad-shouldered, broad-minded handsome boy, master of matter and an uncompromising social Revolutionist and champion of the rights of men.

It was at this point that the Socialist Party of Canada at its 1910 national convention, adopted a resolution pledging the party support to these Co-operators, thenceforth. Secretly, its members were in sympathy to a man; but their assistance had all been individual, and purely voluntary. Now the Industrial and Cadet Democratic Co-operators had gone on record as part and parcel of the Socialist Party and the wrath

of the plutes knew no bounds. Up to this stage, the Industrial Democrats were not considered a political organization.

With the Socialists pledging their united affiliation, it was thought best to hold a national convention of their own, when a reciprocal resolution in favor of Socialism and the Socialist Party, declaring for political action, might be passed. The date agreed upon, it was decided to favor the Pacific coast, and so Victoria was settled on, and the date fixed for September the 8th. Young Sands, founder of the Red Cadets, and now world-famed scientist, had promised to deliver the unity address, and on the night of September 7th, after the evening's entertainment, and accompanied by his new-found father, Dr. and Toy Spanto, Jack Philips, and his crew, he gave the signal to Captain Hautier, and the *Agitator* turned into a thing of hissing fire and sinking into the rolling waters of the northern sea, began her long run through the Aleutian Islands.

“Quimby, are you not afraid of hitting an island or a sunken reef, running at such terrific speed in the night and under water? There are thousands of tiny islands spattered all over this course on the map,” Jason cautioned, as his son pointed to the speed dial which indicated a rate of two hundred miles an hour.

“No, father. There is absolutely no danger of such an ancient calamity befalling any modern ship equipped with the *finder ray*. Look,” the boy commanded, pointing to a mirror-topped table in the center of the operating room. From a small tube with a funnel-shaped extremity, located immediately above the center, streamed down a white glow that flared out over the polished glass, into which gazed a young sailor, who never raised his eyes, nor gave the slightest sign of perception to any of his surroundings, save the one object in the glass before him. He was the helmsman, Billy Self, by name, and one of the few—the very few men among men, who was real, constant, and loyal. Perhaps this may be accounted for by the fact that Billy was one-fourth Cherokee Indian. Quimby first met him in St. Louis, and made the discovery that he was a mechanical genius, and later he was engaged to take charge of the electrical construction of the *Agitator*, and so became one of the crew.

Jason bent down over the strange contrivance, and there in the mirror beheld what looked for all the world like a miniature mill-pond full of islands, with a firefly—belly up—swimming smoothly near the bottom which seemed covered with tiny white shells.

“What is it,” he ventured, finally, “a game?” The eyes of Billy Self fell a little

nearer the mill-pond, and the corners of Quimby's mouth almost suggested a smile as he replied: "No, father, not exactly, see! It is the *Agitator*, and this is the ocean. See how our fire lights up the bottom? And this is the *finder ray*. We are now off Pt. Romanof, where the north fork of the Yukon empties into Pastol Bay. And that thing that looks like a trip-hammer off there to the northwest, is St. Lawrence Island. This is Nunivak, and yonder there are the Priblofs covered in springtime with seal."

Jason bent closer to view the incomprehensible phenomenon before him, his pride in his son mingled with the bewilderment of each new mystery, so overwhelmed him that for some minutes he was speechless.

"It is all very simple, father. Just imagine you are a mile above us and peering down with eyes that pierce the darkness like the radium glow you see there in the mirror; things would look precisely as they do in that mill-pond, as you call it. It is the *angular ray* that is doing the looking down instead of you in this case, and what it sees it reflects on the lens of a powerful vitascope, which, in turn, projects the picture down that tube by means of a thousand tiny mirrors and through a lens to the table, and what you see before you is the result. Thus we have the remarkable

ability to see ourselves as others see us, so to speak.

“Just get a firm hold on something now, keep your eyes on the mill-pond, and I will show you something.” So saying, the son drew a small disk, the size of a silver dollar, from his pocket, and placing it to his lips, though the captain was nowhere to be seen, commanded: “Captain Hautier, circle the ledge on the port, at three fathom, full speed.”

“Ay, ay, sir.” And back came the order:

“Billy, three fathom—around that knob on port—wide open.”

“Ay, ay, sir,” as Billy Self laid his fingers to the key board at the edge of the table. There was a veering and a forward lurch, when the ship seemed to slip from under foot, and rolling to her left side until her decks were vertical, spun around the small island and picking up her former course raced away like a porpoise, throwing a shaving of boiling water and white steam a thousand feet in the air. There it was in the mirror as clear as sunshine; and there was the long stream of white foam stretching far behind, like a necklace of pearls girdling the green billows as the ocean’s breast rose and fell to the even pulse of the harnessed sea.

“We are now traveling at the rate of five hundred miles an hour,” explained the

inventor prince, "and you must know that because of the fierce blast of exploding gas coupled with our great speed, we are not touching the water at all. At this rate we should arrive off Seattle in eight hours. But we are in no such a hurry."

A few words to the commanding officer as before, and the *Agitator* settled back into her former position near the bottom and took up her old gait of two hundred miles.

It was a wonderful performance; but what impressed Jason Sands more than everything else was the perfect harmony, discipline, and the unaccountable just-rightness of everything in connection with his son's strange ship. There was no confusion. Everyone knew everything. Everything worked without friction. It was neither too hot nor too cold, and all were well and happy.

There was a *something* in the pregnant atmosphere of that wonder-craft that had not as yet been explained. There was a mystery about it, a sweet, æsthetic ego that seemed to guard each truant vibration with the mastery of infinite love and perfect peace.

The very walls had ears.

There were no loud shoutings, yet officers conversed freely though separated and from any part of the vessel.

Light was everywhere whenever wanted, but of lamps there were none.

Music played out of the very air one breathed, and sleep came at the bidding—sleep that was sound, and dreamless, and sweet.

What did it all mean? Jason Sands would know! but it was midnight, his second night on board a floating heaven—a heaven built out of the brain of his son—his only, and greatly beloved son.

His stateroom was like the inside of a huge eggshell, standing on its thickest end, and hanging in his cot from the dome above, was like a canary on a swinging perch in a cage.

No sooner had he stretched himself in repose, than on came the restful garnet-emerald tint, and from somewhere far distant came tinkling, liquid sounds, the same sounds and the same tint that he had marveled at the night before.

He could smell the salten odors now, and as he strove to keep awake that he might listen to the sweet, faint music and view the mellow tints, the colors faded away, leaving an azure sky with the stars all in their places, and out of which on the Eastern horizon rose the yellow, Northern moon.

Mountains, snow-capped, appeared as the moon got higher, and a delightful cool pervaded the night. He thought of the old mountain home of his blighted childhood; but the music was sweet, and the thoughts

did not make him sad. He thought of the storm on the lake with his brothers at dead of night, and of the haven of refuge in the Karns cove; of Ben Page and the "Broken Bone," and of the night on the shelf with the wolves. They were all fond memories now; and as the playing ceased and the darkness grew apace, heavier hung the restful lids, and sleep, profound, and peaceful sleep, huddled him in her mystic arms, as a mother fondles upon her soft bosom the cheek of her slumbering babe.

"More inventions," explained his son next morning. "Inventions, not for the enslaving of men, but for man's mastery of the Universe."

"To enjoy the day, man must be wakeful; but at nighttime he should sleep. In order to sleep fully and properly, the senses must be in tune with the peculiar chemistry of the night—darkness. The very name—Day, is enough in itself to suggest activity; while to speak of Night is to suggest rest and sleep," he said. "Imagine one sleeping perfectly in a great city!"

"Sleep is as essential as breath, and the generation which gets little of sleep gets little of life. I have found a way of separating the physical consciousness from the intangible, or sub-consciousness, by creating a harmony between the cellular activity of the living body and the inert nebular ego.

"The tints, the stars and moon and the

mountains you saw were simply pictures thrown on the transparent walls of your room from the outside, and what appeared like music was played on the fine metal wires attuned to catch the minute strains of melodies played, not by human hands, but by the cycles of the living spheres.

“My inventions are not contrary to Nature, but in accord with Nature.

“Man has strayed far from life because he has strayed far from Nature. I would lure him back to the fold by transporting him far remote from the deadly crash and maddening roar of his congested cities, and so I have made a sleeping-room that produces this desired effect. All may possess them when things are made for use instead of for profit—and that day is at hand.”

They were among the Aleutians now, the day was beautiful, and the *Agitator* was flitting in and out among the bays and small islands, running at low speed, and only half submerged. The picture men were on deck, and the ship was being maneuvered skillfully among a herd of walrus, when a low, deep rumbling, like the distant reverberations of a world exploded from within, rose above the surging breakers. The sea parted and rolled back beneath the *Agitator's* very feet. Up from the nether regions belched a deluge of molten vomit, as with the travail of Hell a redhot mountain reared itself out of the bubbling ocean—another

obsidian babe born—the son of a Vulcan sire.

Jason Sands and his son were seated in the latter's private laboratory when the first murmurings of the eruption were recorded on the delicate instruments of that wonder-chamber. Simultaneously with this the marine seismograph became violently agitated and a sharp, bell-like signal rang throughout the vessel. At a key-board above which was the one word: "Comet," flew the right hand of the young scientist, with the left he jerked down a lever, labeled: "Full Speed Ahead."

"Hang on, father," he cried, sharply, "the doors of Hell are opening right under us, for this is the so-called volcanic belt, where the number of these islands fluctuates over night like the price of foodstuffs on the stock exchange. I've sent up the *Comet* for pictures, and as soon as we're straightened out we'll go on deck and see what a new earth-babe looks like all warm and smoking. I have never seen one, and what we may see here in the reflector is not satisfying. Come on, now, here we are, as motionless as the progress of the St. Louis Million Population Club."

Sure enough, when they reached the deck the ship was rolling stationary on the sun-silvered sea, and the sight of the flashing, fluttering scooting little *Comet*, dodging hither and yon through the smoke and fall-

ing cinders, as she gathered moving pictures of the wonderful scene, was a treat better imagined than the butchery of words can describe.

At a distance of three miles to windward, the intense heat could be felt, as the stream of glowing lava spewed out over the crest of the great cone and into the water. Into the heavens, as from the stack of a mammoth locomotive, shot up a tower of black smoke and red stones, while far to the south-east spread out an ever-widening cloud of fine, white ashes, hanging like open-work lace on the evenly moving wind. And with the sun shining through this veil of earth-ashes was effected an aurora borealis, rivaling in magnificence the wondrous beauties of the boreal circle. Who shall arise to disprove it when the scientist who is not for sale, announces to the world that this *is* the Auroro Borealis that for centuries has lured the adventurer to death among the Arctic snows? We shall see ere this narrative ends. And we shall know the mysteries of the North Pole; for be it known that the *Agitator* can sail as smoothly and as swiftly through a mountain of ice as through the tropical waters of the Torrid Zone. Also we shall know the secret of the hidden fires under the earth and under the sea. The History of the histories shall be opened and the diary of Nature read in the Light of Reason—rebellious, evolutionary, scientific, revolutionary Reason.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE JUVENILE DEMOCRACY.

Every eye with gladness beaming,
With the love-light flashing—gleaming—
Banners, one-hued, all astreaming
In the Dawn of Brotherhood !

With her blood-red banner waving and the great *finder ray* feeling out the channel in the strange waters, the *Agitator*, her auxiliary, the *Comet*, gracefully flying on ahead, slipped into Queen Charlotte Sound through Georgia Strait and dropped her feet into the mud at the bottom of Victoria harbor.

Once departed from the zone of quake and volcano, the route had lain hard by the picturesque Alaskan Peninsula through Shelikof Strait and among the wave-eaten crags all the way to the Beautiful British Columbia city.

From the mainland an Empire cheered them—an Empire? Nay, a *Democracy*!

From every harbor craft colored lights and bunting floated until it seemed that all Canada, afame with red, had poured out her citizenry to do them honor.

A hundred thousand voices in mighty chorus cleft the air to the fiery strains of the *Marseillaise*, played on a thousand bands. Above the human forest soared the

beautiful little aluminum *Comet*, playing her powerful searchlight in all the colors of the rainbow, and illuminating the harbor, while a lighter from H. M. S. *Homewrecker* came alongside to take the *Agitator's* party ashore.

The industrial Democrats, or, as they were more commonly called, The Co-operators, had just completed their magnificent new Coliseum in Victoria City, and in it were gathered twenty thousand eager souls. Each fired with the new enthusiasm, and all animated with a single motive—a single purpose. It was a grand pageant. No conquering hero of old was ever more honored. For weeks the entire press of the Dominion had been devoting pages to the exploits and successes of the *Agitator*, and now it was the survivors of the *Aurora* and the spat with the captain of the *Terror* only yesterday.

Across the border in the United States, little or nothing was known of them. The press of that judge-ravaged land being owned from editor to "devil" by the commercial interests, the people never heard much of the Socialists and Co-operators but knocks. So when the Industrialists carried Canada for Socialism, the facts were adroitly and malevolently misrepresented or diplomatically suppressed through the old familiar journalistic trick of the "conspiracy of silence."

In the Coliseum there were no curtains, flies, wings or other scenery. Instead of these there were contrived *vapor rays*, upon which played the most marvelous color effects from picture machines—radium lighted. It was like the thick veil of a colored mist possessing the power of the mirror to reflect whatever the lens might throw upon it. Where the drop curtain should have been, spread out the restful tinted glow of the strange garnet-emerald effect which had so puzzled Jason Sands in his stateroom on the *Agitator*. Not a lamp was visible in all that great playhouse; but light, mellow and soothing, blended artistically throughout the auditorium in every known color effect, or melted into midnight at the whim of a keyboard operator in the “light-house.”

From open spaces all around the upper dome the pure air came in through the same fine white silk screens through which the salten odors had blown in Jason’s quarters, when he first awoke in his swinging cot in Norton Sound. The white silk screens being simply thin shafts of electro-radium through which the cool winds streamed, warming as they streamed. It was the new method of heating and lighting that had come to take the place of coal and other dirty fuel. It was one of the inventions of a Red Cadet, whom the Canadian Government had instantly recognized and honored;

for things under the rule of the Co-operative Democracy were created for *use* and not for commercial exploitation, and Genius, for the first time in the history of the race, was honored and set free. The new discovery, called *volt-o-sheen*, was inexpensive once the proper chemicals were set in action, and lasted a lifetime. The smoke nuisance was abated, coal mining was abolished, and the race lifted up a long jump from poverty, toil and disease.

All the new houses of the I. I. Ds. were equipped with *volt-o-sheen*, and through corrugated floors all dust and bad odors were pumped off, the suction being regulated to correspond with the intake of pure air at the dome. This pure air, coming in through the electro-radium screens, was heated to the right temperature, and drawn straight down and out through thin slits under foot, then off through other white-hot rays, thus performing the lung service of those within and returning to commingle with and resume its travel through space, purified and revitalized. No dust ever rose above the soles of the feet, and the air was always sweet and pure in the theaters and other buildings of the new Democracy. Brooms and vacuum cleaners had been swept away, and housewives were no longer coal-stoking, broom-wielding soldiers of drudgery.

During the wait before the lecture the audience was treated to thirty minutes exhibition of motion pictures and music. The lights went out, and on a screen of non-illuminous vapor played the tragedy of the Yukon River, the rescue, the eruption, and the birth of the new island among the Aleutians. Next followed some beautiful panoramics from Japan. Then came a mighty explosion of human enthusiasm, when, and without warning, on came the lights to reveal the stage a horticultural vista of floral effulgence.

Seated in couples where tropical verdure stirred to the wing-flittings of humming birds, were a thousand Red Cadets in their uniforms of scarlet and gold; and in the center of all, amid festoons of gorgeous red roses sat the modest young scientist. Between the Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada and the Mayor of Victoria he was seated—the boy scientist, the son of Jason Sands. He it was whose brain revolt had wrought with genius to free his class and lift humanity up and out of the hell of wage-slavery.

The Mayor of the city was the chairman of the evening, and he lost no time in introducing the Governor-General. They were both social revolutionists, and their speeches were short, rapid and full of humor and good cheer. The Governor-General paid the Red Cadets, of whom

Quimby Sands was chief, the compliment of having made it intellectually possible for Canada to become one of the first Socialist Democracies on earth. And then came the introduction.

With the pronouncing of his name the tall athletic figure of the young god-man glided swiftly forward to begin his address. The storm of applause that greeted him amounted almost to a frenzy. From his box on the right Jason Sands could look out over the vast throng that filled every inch of space in that huge hall. "To see my son," he exclaimed exultantly to himself, "to see my son, my boy! My boy!" He was thinking of the old days once more, days of barbaric insecurity and the battle of life-and-death, when after having been left stranded in the Albion House in Halifax, Novia Scotia, by that old fraud, "Prof. Harrington," he had fought a prize fight with one Scanlon, in an old barn on the outskirts of the city, to get money with which to pay the skipped board bill and to get out of town. Wherever this old faker acquired the bogus title of "Prof." was a mystery. He always reminded Jason of Davy Crockett's "Thimblerig," and palmed himself off on the unsuspecting public as a sort of nut-shell magician, barn-storming country towns where he held forth his prize-package performances bedecked in a seedy Prince Albert coat from

which dangled a glittering array of brass medals and French paste.

Jason had first met the sleek villain in the Victoria Hospital. Blood poisoning they said it was, and it had resulted from overmuch meat eating. Here "Thimblerig" had fled for safety and to recuperate from a near-lynching from which he had escaped in his own home town. Jason, who was slow to find out wrong in men, had helped the "snap" showman on to his feet with his last dollar, only to be "touched," then later deserted by him for his trouble.

As his son stood there bowing to the thunderous roar of applause, he could not help contrasting the scene with the dingy suffocating hives in which he had sung while traveling with the aforesaid Harrington "straw" outfit. Also his thoughts reverted to the Victoria Hospital, where they had put him to bed in a ward cot upon which had died, only the night before, a sailor whose hip had been eaten out with an abscess. The bed had not been "changed," and when he tried to turn over he experienced a sensation akin to what might be imagined of one lying on a sheet of Tanglefoot fly paper. He threw off the covers. The stench was awful! With an heroic effort he rolled out of bed, the sheet and mattress still pasted to his side, and there heaped up in a thick puddle on the floor, and hanging in great gobs from the under-

side of the mattress, was the accumulated pus from the dead sailor's abscess, alive and squirming with maggots.

This was nothing like his thistle-down dream while swinging in that fluffy bird's nest cot on the *Agitator*, he decided. Howbeit, this was Capitalism. But the day of Capitalism was fast fading into oblivion.

When he thought of the perfect health of his son and the crew of the *Agitator*, he could not help turning to the other pictures back in the departed years, when he had been caught in the seething vortex of Chicago's insane swirl. There, packed in a lodging house with hundreds of others like canned fish, all the beautiful theory of "free-born Americanism" had been squelched in him. And between mal-practice, which operated to abort human souls, and political graft, the function of which was to suck blood from the living progenitors of those throttled souls, was welded the middle link, poverty, in the awful social chain.

Next it was the army of the unemployed. Sandwiched among the cliff-dwelling hordes down in the congested rookeries of the under-world, he had seen sick babies literally eaten alive with rats and flies; while on couches of dirty straw sprawled scurvy dogs licking the oozing pus from the syphilitic sores of these dead babies' mothers.

He contrasted all this with the beautiful homes of the Co-operators and the happy picture before him; but the old drama persisted. He closed his eyes that the transposition might be the clearer, and the pictures flashed forth as sharp as cameos. There were the ups and down of toil and idleness; jobs and no jobs. Working half time or loafing, with the annual rush at end of season. Then his genius would revolt and with his scant savings he would make an investment. But feasting on fat viands during the successful lulls between periods of panic and poverty, only served to sand his rebel brain with more rebellion; and when once again the unequal circumstances of an unjust environment matched him to battle with the Pale Lady of Starvation, he called her fake "equality" bluff with a challenge of protest surcharged with treason and red revolution. Then it was that he would mount a soap-box on the street corner, and with the irrefutable logic of Socialism furiously harangue the ignorant multitude whose votes outnumbered those of their masters ten to one.

But after suffering the taunts and jeers of these besodden slaves until forbearance ceased to be a virtue, he would disappear from these pestilential fens of brutish toil and criminal fecundity, and peacefully in his cabin on the mountain side he would sleep long and sweetly to the roar of tem-

pest and crash of thunder, or to the melancholy hoot of the glare-eyed owl. "Twere music in his ears, he remembered, contrasted with those brain-wrecking bedlambs of the urban hells in which he had stifled.

While the joy-mad crowd yelled and clapped he went as in a dream through the whole frightful drama back to the mother, then again to their boy who was bowing and smiling to the mightiest audience Jason had ever seen. He remembered the promise he had made to her as she lay with glazed eyes in her last hour of earthly pain. He had kept that promise, and surely he had not lived in vain. All his suffering was nothing contrasted with the joy of that glad moment. Slavery in their shoe factories from Lynn to San Francisco, and including the foul "penitentiaries" of St. Louis, was nothing; frost was nothing; hunger was nothing, and had he lost both his good legs in the wolf fight, still would he now be supremely happy that he had lived to feast his eyes on the proud scene before him. There in the sinewy tower of youthful virility among those flowers, he saw himself as Erma had seen him on that eventful day when they first looked into each other's eyes, there to read the unwritten chapter of a pure and reciprocal love.

"It is the shoot from the root of the tree," he mused. He was talking in a monotone to himself, oblivious to all save the

sapling counterpart of his younger self before him.

Back his thoughts went, back there to the old Holiness Town House where he was "Moderator," addressing the town meeting! His gaze was riveted on the stage, but his thoughts were far away. He was aroused from the dreams of his childhood when an exquisitely beautiful young girl in robin's-egg blue and with corn-silk blonde hair, advanced and pinned a luscious red rose on the lapel of his son's coat. The cheering burst out anew. The young man drew the blushing maiden to him and kissed her in her shining hair, and the crowd went wild! His father looked on and a great longing welled up in him. He remembered how that Erma had done this same thing to him at the church festival, and how he had seized and kissed her on the forehead to the delight of the rustic young folk of the long ago.

"I see it all," he philosophized. "It is I, the stuff of me, the ego of me, aye, the very soul of me, coming down to him—living *in* him—just as I am the living prototype of my father."

But the skein was only in the spinning. The story but begun. What had there been two instead of one? Or had Erma lived, what then? What had there been six, eight, ten—a dozen—boys and girls? O, it were all the same, plural instead of singular,



"An exquisitely beautiful young girl in robin's-egg blue and with corn-silk blond hair, advanced and pinned a luscious red rose on the lapel of his son's coat, and the crowd went wild!"

souls, not soul, there was no limit, only in death.

This, then was the Secret—age old and age sought—*the offspring, the shoot, the seed, the egg—the soul!* Or a soul for every offspring, shoot, seed, or egg. They were numberless. The greater the multiplicity of progeny, the more prolific the tree of procreation, and the larger the number of its living souls. Each *a soul of its soul*, in turn to number *their souls* according to the fruitfulness of the tree. It was an endless chain—this racial soul-fabric—and it must go on, and on, and up, and up, to the very heights. But to die childless were to die soulless! He had not lost his soul, for there before him it stood, his son, though he had but the one. Here was the answer at last: *earth, the home of the soul!* It was a challenge!

Jason was leaning far out over the gold railing of the box, eager to catch the first words that should fall from his son's lips. As the storm of greeting subsided, Quimby turned and caught his father's eye. There was a glitter of moisture there, like the glitter of dew on the frostflower petals in autumn on the mountain. It was the glitter of the dew of joy.

The scientific construction of the building was such that, with its devices of balance for the harmonizing of sound, the faintest vocal articulation was clearly audi-

ble throughout the remotest reaches of its vast interior. Like all the intricate machinery he had invented, which worked smoothly and noiselessly, the theory of Tune was his hobby. There was much on the printed page about it, but young Sands it was who had reduced the theory to a practical science. It was Temperature, Tune, Chemical Tune—Life. Everything was a correlation. There were no separate substances or independent particles set apart by themselves; all were but fragmentary members of the one great organism, and with disunited action or obstructed scope, only confusion and discord must result.

All the homes of the Industrial Democrats were built with this idea of “tune” molded into the very cement of their every wall. Wood, brick and stone had gone with the ox cart and the wooden loom; and only glass and cement and metal had remained. These could not burn down, but would last forever. Wall paper, lace curtains and carpets also had been relegated, together with all the rest of the germ-laden trash and trumpery of an out-lived civilization, the existence of which had depended on its ability to market perishable clutter to an impoverished and enslaved people for the profit the traffic yielded.

But what was the speaker saying?

“You call me ‘Professor,’ but I am not a professor. Any one may be called a professor, for to be a professor is but to profess something. Some profess what they are not, others are what they profess not to be. I am not a professor, but a doer. I have found out means of bringing light out of darkness. I was born in darkness and ignorance, like the rest of my race; but I smarted under the lash of hunger, and the befuddling word-wine of the sooth-sayers was abomination to me. I was a seeker after knowledge.

“In the workshop of Nature I served an apprenticeship to the Force god. There I learned that all not of force was decadent.”

Then he went through the whole constructive program of the universe, showing that it was the law of force—organic force—that shot up the mighty oak from the tiny acorn, dry and inanimate. It was force, he said, organic force, the activity of chemical good health through contact under temperature, that was responsible for the rejuvenation, revitalization and perpetuation of all life. Even the planets were kept in their respective places in the great cosmos, like gears in a monster machine, through the operation of this same law and by the same force that attracts and repels in the two poles of the magnet.

Then there was the thing, Love. This also, was force, the greatest, grandest, but

withal the most subtle of forces amalgamate. The forces of shot and shell, bayonet and billy, tyranny and superstition, faded into insignificance in the brilliancy and force of the Love electrodes.

Love had ever been enslaved, he charged, with the enslaving of the hands; but then, Love was young. Also Love was ignorant. But Love was the ripening virgin of human brotherhood, and was at that very moment tugging at the thongs, and the yoke was even now falling from her bruised, white neck. What of the new Industrial Democracy? It was the birth of the Co-operative Commonwealth—a brotherhood—a love civilization.

“Love is coming of age,” he announced, when again they would let him continue. When the maiden attains her majority she will be eligible in wedlock; then will her champion appear to claim her for his mate. This will be Love wedded to Humanity, the long betrothed starvelings between which for a thousand years has stood the bloody myrmidons of the robber king, Merchand.”

Jason was all attention. Both poet and philosopher himself, the words of his son were rarest morsels of mental nourishment to his hungry ears. This is what he would have liked to say, but the boy had said it better. He was cultured, Jason was not. One the rough diamond, the other the polished gem. He could strike the staggering

blow, but the other could speak the flaming word. One had lived the life, the other *was* the life. The father had read out of the books, the son was reading into them. One was the past and the present, the other the present and the future. Jason marveled at the smooth delivery of each clean-cut word, and the throng swayed under their magnetic voltage like willow tendrils in an April wind.

Jason looked at Jack Philips. That sunny boy-man was showing all his double row of white teeth in a pleased and satisfied smile which was the very essence of undignified delight. He knew the stuff of Jack, and it was to laugh and love that Jack lived. But there was the Aztec, Span-to, burning into the scene with his big black eyes afire with passion. On his arm clung the Indian bride of his, wide-eyed but crying. It was too much for her. The good priest had pictured Heaven to her, but nothing like this had she ever dreamed of earth. These strange men—these Socialists—were not angels, she knew that, but somehow they did not belong to earth. It was all too good to be true. Besides, some of these men were un-Christian—unbelievers—some of the best of them. Even there were avowed Atheists among them; but then, all this was true of the multitudes of men she had known, only it seemed that always these ungodly scientists managed to

make their point, right or wrong, and were genuinely unafraid. How different with the hypocrites, she thought. They were always quarreling among themselves, and ever ready to start an argument.

But the crowd was cheering again. What was it Quimby Sands was saying, the while he pointed to his father in the box? He had been telling them passionately of the years of double search of father and son each for the other, of the struggles and perils of his father, and the story of his dead mother whom he had never seen. Silent and motionless, they sat, or sympathetically aroused with the dynamic passion at his righteous rebellion. He told them the story of his early struggles, and the press of the wrongs seemed to weigh them down like a Jehovan wrath.

There were many Americans in the audience, and they listened to the story of the Red Cadets, and how they came to be born, with keen interest. The distribution of classified literature, he told them, was the function of the Red Cadets. This, and health culture, along with the study of *self*. It was not in the books, but Quimby Sands had written it into his classified literature. Classified literature meant *classified literature*. It didn't mean a conglomeration of bewildering generalities, extravagant personalities and incomprehensible statistics cheaply printed on the poorest paper and

addressed to "You workingmen!" It meant what it said—for instance: "THE GOD OF THE SOD." This was a 100-page pamphlet on farming. It was printed on good, strong paper calculated to stand the shuffle, and it told all about farming, from the time the first crooked stick was made to scratch the earth, and before, all the way up through the hand-hoe, the hand-sickle and the bucket of seeds, to the mighty automobile gang-plow, steam seeder, reaper and thresher. It told the farmer what the farmer wanted to know. Yea, it told him more than he *knew* he wanted to know. It told him that *he* was the creator, sustainer and the unthroned god of the earth.

This book sold for 25 cents, and wherever it was sold it did the work—it *made* SOCIALISTS. Through it Socialism was carried to the tiller of the soil cooked to suit his taste, and served in a style especially attractive and interesting to *him*. It was the business of the Red Cadets to see that every farmer bought and paid for a copy of this book; and this it was, more than anything else, which had won Canada to Socialism.

Then there was "THE CITIES UNDER THE SEA." This was a 100-page booklet for carpenters. It began back of man, back and beyond and beneath, down under the sea, and told first of the coral workers, and how that they were *united* and always

worked together. From these it told of the tree people, and of their nests. Next it went into the hills among the cave folk, then out on the plains under the skin tepee and the dugout. Finally it took the reader into the modern mansions of the monied parasites whose fabulously grand abodes may be pointed out in any big city, on the Hudson River above the Palisades, at Bar Harbor, Newport, or on the sunny shores of the Pacific. This book was for the builder and his art. There was nothing left out, it told it all. Moreover, it told it in a language spoken by the modern carpenter. In fact it pled his cause and in the pleading it laid the remedy for his unrealized dreams of a beautiful home for himself and his loved ones in his lap.

And so through the list: The barber, the baker, the boilermaker and the biscuit shooter. None were forgotten, and it showed what was, is, and will be. Not because some men wanted it, fought for it, and that it was a good thing; but because there were underlying forces in the very meat and marrow of man's social being that had been, is still, and will continue to be compelling it. Each special classified propaganda pamphlet for each separate trade, profession or calling, treated the subject to the same end, but in a different set of words, and always apropos the particular job at which one worked. It showed

that the population of the earth had increased since the days of the hand tool, and that the hand tool had passed with the onward march of the race up and into the huge factory. With the coming of the machine had come the increase in the product of each pair of hands. But with the factory owned by the masters, the creators were dispossessed. In other words, the private ownership of the public means of life had become inadequate to the public needs, these pamphlets taught, and the time was come when the workers must either unite and possess the earth and all the machinery of social needs collectively, or else the race must starve to death for the pleasure of a few plutocratic masters.

When young Sands first conceived of classified literature, he forthwith proceeded to tell it to his "friends," as, before he got his eye teeth cut, he had always ran to them to tell them of his inventions. It was sympathy and encouragement that he wanted, but, as in the case of his inventions, he had gotten neither. Only jealousy gave they him, coupled with an attempt to pull him down to their pigmy level.

But the Red Cadets were more than propagandists. They were an organization. In every town and city, in every state and nation their "garrisons," or Capitol houses, with a single exception, had gone up to float the crimson banner of universal brother-

hood, and that single exception was the United States. Here, their birthplace, they were slandered, ridiculed, and held down to the level of the low order of capitalistic intelligence prevalent of the low order of governmental administration. Especially low was the order of intelligence in St. Louis. It manifested itself everywhere. There was no congeniality or sociability there. Of course, ignorance was responsible for this. It is always ignorance and the consciousness of ignorance that seals the lips and glints the eyes. An "Easterner" was spotted on the instant in St. Louis. He always held his head erect and wore his handkerchief in his hip pocket. Let an Easterner reach for his pocket handkerchief in public, and every one automatically reached for his gun. Street car conductors insulted passengers with impunity, and the cats and dogs killed on the trolley lines remained to be trampled into the muddy streets until carried away by flies and maggots. But out on the corner of Lindell Boulevard and Newstead avenue was built the largest and most magnificent Catholic Cathedral in America. It cost three million five hundred thousand dollars; and a five minutes' ride distant, naked babes were subsisting on a diet of swill.

In St. Louis, the home of the Red Cadets, there were twenty thousand of them; but they were forbidden to erect their own Cap-

itol building. That they were a "conspiracy," was the decision of a corporation-owned judge, and not being citizens "of age," were held to be irresponsible! But they were undeterred by such rulings, however, and the good work went on, and the Socialist vote continued to rise with the distribution of the classified literature sold by the live boys and girls right under the very noses of their masters. But of all the classified pamphlets written by Jason Sands' son, probably the one entitled, "THE HOLLOW ORIFICE" was the most effective. It was a terrible indictment against war, and many a Boy Scout had been seen to smash his gun and trample his cheap cotton uniform as a result of reading this frightful tale of blood.

And so, with the coming of classified literature and the Red Cadets had come the Canadian victory, he told them.

"But you want to know what is to be done in the case of the United States," he resumed. "Well, there they have not as yet learned the simplest rudiments of co-operation. They are great on division, subtraction, limit and boundary lines, but, although having themselves taught it for a hundred years, they have not learned the meaning of the motto of every lodge and other organization on earth: '*United we stand, divided we fall.*' But speaking of boundaries, let me tell you a story.

“The imaginary boundary lines that the God-fearing nations have conveniently drawn around themselves,” he said, “are but the unnatural barriers erected by the robber chiefs and maintained but for the purpose of legalized private plunder. They are perpetually operated to keep the workers divided with race hatred, that they may the more easily sic them to fighting whenever a war may be profitably pulled off on the tame public.” Then he referred to the boundary between Canada and the United States as a geographical spite fence. It was an insult to their pratings of “Love thy neighbor as thyself.”

“Such epithetical derogations as ‘John Bull,’ ‘Yank,’ ‘Canuck,’ and all that vindictive vernacular, must soon drop from our vocabulary,” he prophesied. “Socialism knows no boundaries, but wherever they may be, Socialists are brothers—Comrades.”

Recalling a very interesting, though not generally well-known bit of American history, he told them the story of the “Great British-American hog war!” It most probably was the first time it had been told by a Socialist on the Canadian side, and from the levity it engendered the Socialist position on boundaries seemed sound.

“Across the Strait, there in the Sound,” he went on, “lies the beautiful little island of San Juan. On that speck of dirt—a part

of the earth that God is said to have concocted from less material and then given to all men—occurred a very silly fracas, once upon a time, which came near plunging these two great Christian nations into a bloody war. A hog was the cause of it all! Imagine two mighty nations going to war over a hog! The hog was said to have been a ‘blooded’ hog. Which, I presume, is to say, that he was an importation from ‘The Other Side.’ As if all self-respecting hogs weren’t blooded. However, I guess the ‘blooded’ point was well taken, for I am acquainted with both blooded and bloodless, as well as some *bloody* hogs myself. Some hog all the money, others all the oil, and still others, all the food from the mouths of innocent children, and then for good measure root up the homes of workingmen who exhibit enough spine to dare a healthy protest.

“Among the hogs without blood, but through whose slimy veins sloughs the cold maggot-water of graveyard affinity, is the bloody old *Sus scrofa*, Diaz, who for thirty years swallowed, with cloven hoof and tushes red and dripping, through the broken heart of poor, groaning Mexico—as Bill Reedy says: ‘Our sister Republic, God save the mark!’ This grizzled swine, whose every grunt meant the death of a patriot, is now well-nigh blind and toothless, and his scrawny bristles once black as the pouch of

night-shade that serves him for a heart, are now a yellow-grey, like the grey of the dreaded timber angels of the Arctic. But he still grunts and wallows, and out of the skulls of babies and widowed mothers he drinks the sweat and blood of his murdered slaves. Once upon a time—a time that went down in history on a page draped in mourning—a ‘great’ President of the United States of America journeyed thither to that land of weeping stones to fondle and caress, and press the foul-smelling hoof of that bloody, unblooded monstrosity, *‘in the name of the people of the United States!’*

“But I am straying from the aforesaid history apropos the great British-American hog war.

“The island of San Juan belongs to a well-known group which had always been considered a part of the territory of your Uncle Sam; but the Hudson Bay Co., the first great North American trust, conceived a sly trick by means of which the fertile little spot might be successfully stolen, and so arbitrarily planted over it the Union Jack. That its population consisted chiefly of Americans made no difference to the rough necks. The company’s agent, a Cockney Briton, had an old razor-back and that John Bull hog ate the Yankee’s cabbage; the Yankee shot the blooming porker and the war was on. Up

drew the imposing fleet of H. R. H. Queen Victoria. It was a warlike spectacle, and it demanded restitution from the man who had so wantonly slain a British subject! But I guess the Yankee nomad hadn't the price, or else he wanted some fun; anyway, he loaded his old musket again instead. That ended the great British-American hog war.

"It is not impossible that some among you have forgotten that, on the island of San Juan, over there in Puget Sound, flew the last British flag above United States soil. That was in the year 1859."

"Good jawke, awld man, and bloody wull tawld," laughed a lank Englishman with a mop of yellow hair and wearing a grin that came dangerously near severing his head at the ears. This story put the house in a jocose mood, and a ripple of levity flowed over it, during which the lank individual sprang up in his seat, and waving his arms wildly for recognition, shouted: "You Saw-shalists as wull as anarchists all fly the sime flag, naow yer naow, dawntcher naow. Would yer mind tulling us abaowt th' Red Flag, plyse? Of course, I naow, yer naow. But there may be some Hermericans 'ere oo dawnt naow, dawnt yer naow."

"It is said that wolves, prey-birds, bulls and other forms of gore-spilling beasts hate and fear red," the speaker replied. "When any of these see red it acts on their nerves

like fire on powder. They explode. Fear is generally associated with guilt, and cunning is the pander of cowardice and crime.

“The Red Flag is not embellished with the skull and crossbones, nor mottled, striped or crossed with many hues. Therefore, it is not a fit emblem of ‘patriotism’ in a society where the street pavements reek with the brain-spatterings of police club brutality, and where the young sons of the nation are drilled by the church, armed by the government, uniformed at the expense of their impoverished parents and incited to pose as living targets for the machine-gun, the cannon and the torpedo. Honest work folk are not afflicted with terror at the sight of red flags—or any other flags. Like pure women and innocent children they are without fear, and the fluttering hues of banners give them no cause for alarm.

“It is written that ‘a troublesome fellow’ was once spiked to a cross of wood because he taught the ‘rabble’ that all men were brothers. He said that because the blood of all was red, it bespoke a common parentage. The same story teaches that ‘his raiment was spotless and his banner was the color of blood.’ No wonder the myrmidons of the owning class followed him about to catch words out of his mouth with which to crucify him!” It’s a wonder that the present generation of ‘vipers and hypo-

erites' don't try to twist the Christian religion into a 'seditious doctrine of anarchy!'

"Every Capitalist government under the sun has a different flag. This is as it should be; for how otherwise could their uniformed dupes be befuddled into killing each other in battle? This Heaven-hallowed pastime of pumping lead into one another is never indulged in by the money-mongers who rule the nation. Their function is to give orders. There would be no profit in it for them to lay out on the wet ground o' nights hunting each other with guns. This exhilarating exercise is beneficial only to working men! That's what 'patriotism' is for. This is one of the 'incentives' that Socialism cannot stimulate.

"To the grafting ghoul who fattens on the bread out of the mouths of children, the Red Flag is a signal of gravest danger; but to the toiler it is a sheen of hope and love and blessed peace. To the one it bodes death, to the other it symbolizes joy, and life, and home. To the tyrant it reflects the Raw Head and Bloody Bones of a million battlefields, filling his golden dreams with terror, as in his subconscious fantasy he beholds his rusting riches stained red with the life fluid of the many victims of his cruel greed. To the builders of the world it radiates the cheery smiles of happy children in homes where armless sleeves

and tales of carnage never more shall cast a gloom.

“The Red Flag was once a thing of snowy whiteness; but their rule of ruin splashed upon it the innocent blood of martyrs, dyeing it a crimson hue. What of the Inquisition? What of the Commune? What of John Brown? What of Lovejoy? Their blood is there—*look at your hands!*—*you workingmen who once voted for Capitalism.* What of Russia? What of Ferrer? What of Mexico? What of the millions of poor, misguided mothers’ sons who have been blown to twitching fragments of slippery pulp with shot and shell, while the money Shylocks who coin their quivering flesh into clinking gold were feasting in mansions across the seas, far beyond the roar of war’s red hell and away from the smell of blood?

“The Red Flag is, the badge of my father’s manhood—”

“Three cheers for Jason Sands,” went up the yell!

Like a marine volcano the chorus burst into thunderous applause, followed by the three rousing cheers: “Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! for Jason Sands—Jason Sands! Jason Sands! Speech, speech—”

But the speaker raised his hand for silence, then continued: “It is the deed of my heritage, it is the coat of arms of the class that toils. I see in its folds the

promise of love to a weeping world. I know that *I* am represented there. It is the symbol of freedom. Its very fabric is damp with the sweat of your faces. My mother's tears are there. The virginity of your sweet sisters is protested there, and the stifled moan of the unborn babe, throttled by the bony hand of poverty in its mother's womb, is trembling there.

“What of the victims of the late human carrion who sent troops to Pullman? If he had had his way the blood of honest Debs would now be there; and that the heroic blood of Haywood did not saturate its sacred weft is not the fault of the barbarian of “big stick” infamy, who, for seven years so foully disgraced the public trust. What lisping babe can be found who does not know that the Red Flag of human brotherhood is the International emblem of peace, love, and liberty, that will soon float over an awakened world at the birth of the Co-operative Commonwealth?

“If the anarchists wish to adopt the Red Flag, it is well. It is better to be an anarchist under a Socialist flag than a wage-slave under a Capitalist rag. When all the anarchists become Socialists there will no longer be any Republican or Democratic parties.

Before I had read the history of Christian civilization, trailing it back down the back track of its butchers who were called

'heroes,' I was a Republican. After I had read that I was an anarchist. Then someone lied and told me Socialism and anarchy were the same, so I studied Socialism and became a Socialist.

"This beautiful amusement house is one of the cornerstones of the Industrial Democracy. I am glad to participate in its dedication. It is a thing of social wealth. It proves to me that at last the selfishness of human nature is being understood and applied intelligently. While it is true that selfishness is the motive force behind every action of every form of life, selfishness until now was always individual, and therefore destructive, mean and inhuman. With the Co-operative Democracy has come the collective selfishness. Collective well-being means collective happiness; and out of the pool of this social abundance is absorbed the individual self desires, and the *self defense* of individual competition falls from the individual like husks from the ripened corn.

We are met here to-night to learn from one another. This is another demonstration of intellectual selfishness. It is grand! It is beautiful! It is glorious! In the selfishness of the brute as exemplified through the Capitalist system, men meet that they may become wise in ways whereby they can legally destroy each other. This is what they call 'individuality.' It

is not rightly named. Its real name is *individual barbarity*.

“We Socialists were long called dreamers, by our friends—the enemy. But I say to you that this is the age of the dreamer. They soon shall know that it is the dreamer who is the true progress-god of the dawning civilization. They shall know that the dreamer is the toiler, and that the toiler shall be the dreamer, and that both toiler and dreamer shall be one. The dreams of the future shall be day-dreams. They shall be dreamed with eyes open and out loud in the broad open light of a world without fear; a world without superstition, without ignorance and without chains.”

“Man, like the love-eyed animals, is essentially a social species. But his so-called social systems are not systems of social peace. Instead of social organizations, he constructs competitive congestions. In direct opposition to the constructive harmony of his inherent nature, he has permitted the few degenerate prey-beasts among his family to fasten him down to a divided confusion of ideas, to which he foolishly bows like the idol worshiper and the savage.

“This obeisant prostitution of intellect and ideals, is called patriotism! And the savagery of old which yoked the race in chattel slavery, was nothing in comparison with the mental servility of the pawns of

this our 'representative' form of government.

"Imagine a wolf representing a hare! Can you conceive of the fish-hawk representing the interests of the fish upon whom he feeds? Thinks of a workingman voting for a representative in political office, who possesses millions of dollars—the accrued profits from the traffic in uneaten bread—bread snatched from the hungry mouths of his own patient wife and innocent children. Such indeed were a pitiful sight!"

"I recognize the fact that my body is a great living organism of wonderfully wrought and ever active machinery. I arrived at such a knowledge of this human institution through the study of Science. I found that the great organism called the human body is but the social structure composed of uncountable billions of minute cell life, all joined together to make up the whole perfect working, breathing, happy man. If one single cell among these numberless billions becomes injured, every other cell in this body will rush to the rescue and repair the injury, or the whole organism is likely to become diseased and to disintegrate, and finally to perish. I would have the whole organism live a splendid, full, happy life, by making it possible for every cell making up the aggregate of this body to be well fed, well exercised and well rested.

“I love life. This is some more of the great selfishness of Socialism. How may I obtain that life? That has ever been the race question through all the ages. My answer is, let man organize socially for the perfection of economic conditions which will make for life. What are conditions? Social contact among men—a Society composed of the creators of wealth—a Society of one class—a Society in which the interests of one will be the interests of all—a Social Society.

“The science of Socialism is the science of Self—of Life. If you want a more technical definition go to the Latin. There you will find what ‘social’ means (companion). The ‘ism’ suffix being simply a term—construction, the value of which is to signify that state of companionship which recognizes more than one companion—a collection of companions—a society of companions—Socialism.

“‘Brotherly love’ is not Socialism. Socialism will not be achieved because of such fine sentimental phraseology. Socialism will be first, and will pave the way to brotherly love. Socialism will obtain in the affairs of men because of selfishness, and because of selfishness only—the selfishness that is as broad as space and as generous as sunshine. Selfishness is the vital essence of all force, and Force is the very ego of all things not dead.

“There used to be a peculiar reasoning among working people to the effect that, ‘should the worker get the full product of his toil as Socialism proposes, he would suddenly lose all desire to live, become lazy and dissipated, and finally lay down and die from starvation!’ Every Socialist has been importuned a thousand times to desist from his disastrous course, because, it was urged, unless those who do all the work of the world are perpetually robbed of eight-tenths of what their hands create, there would be no ‘incentive’ and all hands would become discouraged and go on a protracted drunk!

“This same intellectual mastodon used to assure us that, to work for another for seventeen per cent. of one’s labor product were quite the proper thing because it gave one work! But to have an industrial plan whereby the worker worked for himself collectively, retaining all of the one hundred per cent. of his created wealth, would be to ‘divide up!’

“I have lain awake of nights trying to analyze and classify this marvelous mentality, but in vain. In all science there is no chemistry to analyze such a brain, and I very much doubt if posterity will be able to solve the dark mystery during the active cycles of earth’s futurity.

“Come on board the *Agitator* and I will show you what Life means. I will show

you Tune. I will show you Individuality. I will show you Peace, Harmony, Selfishness and Love. There is where we work at all of these. We are all trained individuals. There we make no 'mistakes.' No punishments are inflicted there. We are guilty of no 'sins' or 'crimes.' There you will find Knowledge. There you will become acquainted with Science. There you will observe Balance. On board that ship the obstructions are all removed. 'Self-denial' is not written in our code. We know no styles or fashions. 'Morals' and 'immorals' are not down in our vocabulary. There are no different qualities with us, everything is of the best quality—everything is good.

"We are out for life. With us it is 'good Lord' and 'good Devil,' just so neither comes between us and life. Self-culture and organization keep us in perfect tune with our economic interests, and everybody smiles.

"There are no long faces in our company. Neither have we any special hours for devil charming. When the devil sees us coming he hunts a new latitude and boxes his compass for a stern view. Orders, as such, are unknown under the discipline we maintain; but signals there be which are understood and heeded, it means safety. Safety means greater life—selfishness.

“We are all workers aboard the *Agitator*. But we are all agreed upon something. Every man is self-trained and self-disciplined, we have an objective point—a goal in view. When we start that ship we first have decided that we want to go somewhere. Then we all go that particular way. One-half of us do not try to run the ship northward while the other half battle with the first in the effort to drive her in a southerly direction. In our feeble-minded imagination, we fancy that every man Jack of us is equally necessary in accomplishing any desired result with every other man Jack of us. Thus we are not brought to a ‘dead level,’ but to a *live* level.

“There is no graded parading of aristocratic dignity in our world. We are men.

“I invented the *Agitator* and the *Comet* because I could not help inventing them. Creation is purely a selfish motive with me. Constructive work makes me happy, and I want to be happy. I resolved to give my inventions to mankind, so that, by making the happiness general I would have some chance of getting mine. Anything short of such a plan is short of life, is short of liberty, is short of individuality. And anything short of individual happiness, in any degree, is slavery, and slavery in all its forms must go.”

In the very front row and in the end seat on the left of the center aisle, was seated a

little scrub of a man, who fidgeted constantly, never for an instant taking his eyes off the speaker, except occasionally to flash an evil glance at Jason Sands. Immediately back of him sat two gentlemen in black broadcloth. The youthful orator had not noticed them, probably because of his ultra-enthusiasm; but they had not escaped his father. From his bitter experiences with this sleek species, coupled with the thousand other dangers which for forty years had kept him primed and cocked for trouble, the alert Jason knew he could classify them the moment he laid eyes on the cut-throat trio. From where he sat he could size them up; and he whispered his suspicions to the Aztec doctor, only to be rebuked by Jack Philips with a mild fling at his "oversensitiveness." But Joe Hautier pricked up his ears, and, though no one saw him do it, slipped a hand inside his spotless linen coat. Symbols sat up from dozing on Toy's lap and ventured that there was "sumpling doing." He had detected the faint clicking sounds and recognized them as the same clicking sounds he had heard the night before, when the captain gave the secret signal that "boiled" old Mullock and his revenue tub *Terror* in Norton Sound. Instantly with the clicking sounds flew open a small shutter in the lighthouse, and the white illumination changed to the soft garnet-emerald, then back again to the

white. The changes were so rapid and so soon over that none save the captain of the *Agitator*, the inventor and the operator in the lighthouse noticed the thin, needle-like point of white that shot for a fraction of a second through the garnet-emerald glow and touched the crown of the fidgety man in the front row. Moreover, Captain Joe, the inventor and the lighthouse operator alone knew that the needle-like ray was a "rangefinder."

The meeting was warming to its close. The inspired speaker had poured forth his best effort, dropping periods rapidly and pungently. The one-hundred piece orchestra was essaying its instruments, and the thousand male and female singers were shuffling their music for the *Marseillaise* in the grand finale. That human sea of twenty thousand heads was billowing and rolling to the classical eloquence of the scholarly discourse. They had followed him back through all the sad plethora of a thousand years of grinding toil and sorrow. Warming with the warmth of his child love, and burning with him in the wild fire of his dynamic portrayal of the myriad wrongs of each robber regime. The climax came when, rising to hitherto unsurpassed heights he eulogized his father's name in a recapitulation of the perilous and discouraging events culminating in their recent reunion. And referring to

his giant white-haired sire as the Spartacus of the Social Revolution he concluded, with sweetest sarcasm: "There is a much parroted mouthing more or less popular, characterized as 'hero-worship.' It is a baneful and contagious disease! I do not know its originator, but I think I have located its cause. It appears to be a germ malady whose bacteria belong to the papo-tencio family, which are always largest at the feed end. Strangely enough, the germ is giffonic, existing only in the woof of fright-wigs worn by those who parrot it. If appearances are a criterion, none of these fearsome, stentorian-tongued guardians of probate piety appear in any immediate danger of becoming objects of attack by this particular imaginary pestilence. For sake of argument, it were generous to agree with the hero-worship Nemesis, that heroes never existed, and that bravery never existed; but there were charity in such acquiescence! Some day I am going to write a short treatise on *Jealousy*. Then you will see the unlime-lighted 'parrots' hunting a new classification!"

"You will never find a hero among mockers."

With this last cool challenge to the fault-finding destructionists, and with the righteous pride, generation-proof and generation-inherited, flushing cheek and flashing

from eye, he pointed to where his father—the victor of a thousand unsought battles was seated, and with clarion resonance, cried: "*Behold a hero!*"

They were magic words. They brought the crowd to its feet as if impelled by steel springs. Up went the yell: "Speech!" "Speech!" "Jason Sands!" "Jason Sands!"

Jason heard the clamor, and with swift retrospection he swept back over the years to the street corner and the soap box. Hurriedly he compared his early digressions in the midst of many a motley crowd to the conversational excellence of his son's poignant rhetoric, and wondered if he could really make a speech. But there was no denying them. "I'm in for it," he acquiesced, and with the throng madly hurrahing he made his way to his son's side, and with both crutches under his left arm, he raised his great right hand for silence. It could be seen that his huge bulk shook with great emotion. The crowd still yelled, and he leaned and rested half his weight on his son's shoulder.

The old Spartan was fighting another battle. Was it to be his last! Like a storm-struck ship on a hidden reef for a moment he floundered, then righted on the crest of a mighty wave of fresh enthusiasm, and stood motionless before them like an adamantine sentinel on a storm-swept shore.

For fully ten minutes pandemonium reigned. As one surge of applause upon another rose and fell, an old glad twinkle got in his eye, but he did not smile. All the smile had gone out of him and was buried and frozen in the north snows along with his amputated foot. For twenty years the only smile he had known was the brute smile of battle; and with his last great fight with the wolves had gone that smile forever.

But who was hissing! Quimby knew, for he had seen them at last—the two well-nourished gentlemen in black broad-cloth, and he remembered the threat of Father Munne. With lips parted in a hideous snarl, their fat faces blue with hate, they hissed both son and father while twenty thousand others cheered. The little fidgety man in front exhibited unmistakable signs of fear; but as no attention was paid to the hissing, he sank a little lower in his seat and the two men on the stage stood motionless.

There was a lull, followed by the introduction. Came another stunning outburst, then silence. In a deep bass voice, clear as a glass bell, but with just the slightest tremolo in it, the old rebel gladiator began.

“Why would you hear me?” he protested. “Look at me! I am an old tree! I grew high up on the mountain. I have faced the blast of torrent and tempest; and I have

stood firmly against both quake and deluge. But it is autumn. My limbs are shattered and my trunk rift with the stroke of strife. Over the hill the sun—for me—is going down. It will rise on the morrow, but only for him (laying his gnarled right hand on his son's auburn head). Winter is at hand; and when it comes, like an old tree I shall fall in the snow.

“It is good to be here, and it is good to be loved. I have found my son, or rather he has found me, and I shall live with him on his strange ship; but when the hour strikes, he will take me back to Her. I have tried to live to see Socialism, and now my dream is coming true.

“You are all so happy! That is as it should be. I am happy too—what is left of me—for these boys have fulfilled the promise, and surely ‘ye shall inherit the earth’—*have inherited the earth*. This grand demonstration proves to me that those who cried out in the wilderness cried not in vain.

“I—”

“Blasphemy—”

“Devil,” interrupted first one and then the other of the two groomed gentlemen in the black broadcloth, leaping to their feet with clenched fists and bloodshot eyes.

“ ‘Ere! ‘ere!’” remonstrated the yellow-haired Englishman, and a dead silence like the premonition of doom fell upon the house. Jason and his son stood like petri-

fied trees, and Captain Hautier, followed by Spanto and Philips jumped into the audience from their box, just as the little fidgety man jerked a huge black revolver from somewhere about his person in the act of dropping a shot into the duo on the stage, when the blackness of an ocean cave displaced the colored lights, and a thin, needle-like shaft of lightning-blue white, flashed, meteor-like from the lighthouse straight, with unerring accuracy, and struck the loaded gun in mid-air. There was a puff of white smoke and a faint sound like flushed powder; a splash of molten steel and lead on the aluminum floor, together with the charred remains of the right hand of the little fidgety man burned off at the wrist!

Amid the hysterical screams of fainting women and cries of "fire" and "murder" from excited men, the operator in the lighthouse touched two keys, one labeled "LIGHT," the other "PANIC." Captain Joe and the doctor made a spring for the stage, just as the lights came on; but Philips did not understand, and was so caught with the crowd in the amphitheater. With the return of the lights, out dropped the whole bottom of the coliseum, taking the entire audience with it. Down, down, down into darkness it fell, so rapidly that every tongue was stilled and every breath stayed with the indescribable sensation of dropping feet first into a bottomless pit!

CHAPTER IX.

FOUR YEARS AROUND THE WORLD.

I stood, at twilight, while the pall
Of battlements their shadows flung
Athwart the bullet-eaten wall,
Where dying Communards had sung ;
And there in fantasy, like ghosts,
The murdered myriads arose,
And marshalling their battered hosts,
Forever tyrants to depose,
Unfurled the Banner of the Free—
The blood-red Flag of Liberty !

Ten seconds after the bottom fell out of the coliseum, Jack Philips found himself afloat in a huge barge along with twenty thousand others on a subterranean lake. And in ten minutes more the barge had become the bottom of the coliseum again, and he and the rest were seated as before, while the music and singers rendered the grand old Marseillaise. But neither the little fidgety man nor the two groomed gentlemen in black broadcloth were present!

It was just one more of the life-saving inventions of the New Time. It operated to prevent disaster in case of accident of whatever name or nature. Everything was *invention* under the new order, and it was surprising how many geniuses were bobbing up, now that profit in human labor was—in Canada—a thing of brutal history.

To appreciate this new device, one had but to recall the many holocausts under Capitalism, including the Pemberton mill, the Columbus school, the Bellville convent, the Iroquois theatre, and the Triangle shirtwaist factory. In all of these, as in thousands of others now forgotten, hundreds had been burned and crushed to death for no other reason than that safety devices cost a little money.

None of the buildings of the Co-operators were inflammable, but the heads of men were still inflammable, and there was no precaution too great to be undertaken by the Socialists.

It was no trouble to have these subterranean lakes and gardens, driveways or tunnels. With the electro-radium ray, a mountain could be fused into gas and made to disappear in a few minutes; and to burn tunnels and cavities in the earth for any purpose was but to play the *ray* on the desired point. All matter being simply congealed gas, and gas being lighter than air, all one had to do to get rid of matter was to know the process by which it became reduced to its original state. It was simply a question of getting the fire hot enough. When the *ray* was turned on a granite wall or a clay bank, the stone or clay glowed, turned white, then with a sputtering hiss retreated and vanished before the terrific heat like snow struck with a stream

of hot water. Thus ditches were dug, mines sunk, and surface lands leveled. Also all the foul fever swamps and stagnant pools were in this way eliminated and destroyed.

It was this same fire-force that propelled the *Agitator* and the *Comet*. Back of the thin, semi-circular slits in their hulls, which slits looked like thumb-nail marks on a watermelon, or spoon bowl thrusts in the butter, were aluminum-steel compartments into which was forced a highly combustible gas made from earth and sea water, and stored in hydraulic tanks abroad. Each semi-circular slit slanted astern, and had the invention consisted of this alone, with the compartments filled with air instead of the highly combustible gas, a maximum speed of a hundred miles an hour would have been as easy as running at a ten-knot clip under steam or gasoline with any of the old-fashioned tubs of commerce. Think, then, of the awful resistance of this explosive gas coming in contact with the water and being ignited by the electro-radium ray as it escaped!

Quimby had seen rockets cleave the sky, and with a little study he came to know the force of a burning stream of gas. All the aerial crafts he built were submarines as well, and when running at full speed the exploding gas operated so rapidly and fiercely that the ships themselves never

got time to touch the water at all. It was blown back faster than its own pressure could act against the displacement of the craft. They burned vacuums in either water or air, and through vacuums of their own burning they traveled; thus eliminating friction, their speed was regulated only according to desire. Its limits had never been tested, as no one could be found rash enough to undertake the possibility of stopping after such a test. This was the way of lightning. It was, indeed, a system of rapid transit.

The untutored never would have suspected that the entire seating capacity of the I. I. D's' theatres were built upon boats, and that these boats in turn were resting on ball-bearing toboggan slides, fifty per cent. out of perpendicular, and a hundred feet above underground lakes, seas or rivers. When the keyboard operator in the lighthouse touched the ivory disk labeled "PANIC," he released an electric clutch that held suspended the coliseum's auditorium as the human hand may seize and hold on to an iron ring. To overpower and manacle the godly trio that had caused the trouble, clutch and draw up the audience to its original place, was the work of but moments. Compressed air did the trick, and compressed air never failed.

It seemed there was no escape for these

scientists, these ungodly heretics, these inventors who were continually upsetting the accepted order of things with their un-understandable mechanical devices and their "devilish" theories concerning organic life. Wherever they went it was the same. Trouble was ever there to greet them. They tried to avoid it by every conceivable precaution and kindness, but the disturbers tracked them like hungry wolves. It were ever so. Past history was full of it. Men, like animals, had always shied at things they were too ignorant to comprehend, and these the cunning preyed upon by perpetuating their foolish fears.

Four years, it was, since that little episode in Victoria, and the *Agitator*, stowed with motion picture films, curios, historic data and wood and stone specimens from the far and hidden archives of earth, was lying heavily from her over-weight in the landlocked harbor of St. Johns, Newfoundland.

It was September. They had spoken the "White Squadron" of the Gloucester fishermen, home-bound, off the Banks the day before, for the weather is not fine for cod fishing on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland after September. Gloucester still lived by fishing, and still ate meat; for was it not a part of the great United States?

But Newfoundland, once but an undeveloped island, inhabited ever so sparsely by rough fisher folk, uncultured and poor with the poverty of dirt, was now a veritable tropical paradise, and one of the most popular summer resorts on the North Atlantic Coast. Egg-shaped lay St. Johns just behind a winrow-like range of fossil-sandstone mountains that overhung the South coast, reached through a narrow cut in Signal Mountain, which cut looked as if it had been sawed out with a cross-cut saw.

Seal and cod fisheries had been the island's chief industries back in the days of civilized barbarism; but now the seal oil tanks were gone, and Water street, with its ramshackle canneries and stinking fish offal, was a transformation to beautiful palm gardens, with sparkling fountains and automobile boulevards.

Up the hill, north of the harbor, where the quaint old city used to lean toward the sea, terraces of magnificent cement and colored glass mansions dotted the slope, surrounded by shade trees and flower gardens, and all kept green and growing both summer and winter by means of the electro-radium ray. Cold, wintry winds screeched and howled down the bleak coast in winter, with all their customary fury; but when they struck the screen of "live light" that ran around the city like a

Chinese wall, the coldest blizzards became summer zephyrs, and snow storms turned to warm showers in the heart of zero weather.

This was modern Newfoundland. It was some of the "modernism" feared and fought by the regalian candle-gloomers with their incense nonsense and their tom-tom, tom-foolery of the worm-eaten yesterday. But there was one primal relic of the weak-kneed past that Newfoundland still clung to and cherished. How hardly may we censure her, when we recall that the aforesaid relic came to her honestly down the back stairs of a long line of ancestral back-moss and obsolete monkey-shines? The relic was the town crier! The office had been a lineal perpetuation for three hundred years. Ever since the first hobgoblin yarns of witchcraft lore sent their meandering ghosts excursioning through the superstituous brains of their long since moldy forebears, the town crier of St. Johns had been the annually re-appointed joke. Regularly each hour through the sleeping streets tottered his shriveled form, lantern in hand, his long white whiskers gyrating, like hoar-moss in the wind from his palsied jaw. He was always a good old man—too old to be anything but good—and his voice always trembled like the gurgle of death.

It was more than twenty years since

Jason and old "Thimble-rig" Harrington had played in the STAR OF THE SEA HALL, but the crier was the same old crier, and he looked just the same. Time apparently had wrought no change in him. All changes in him had been made and he was beyond change.

They had put up at THE KNIGHTS' HOME, a Water street hostelry of Dickensonian antiquity, where the servant girls were required to carry the guests' trunks upstairs to their rooms, and servant girls at that time got "two-and-six" a month!

Every nightly hour, in a wheezy monotone, the whole town was awakened by the crier on his lonely rounds, with the following or similar assinine intelligence droned out in a protracted drawl that sounded for all the world like a squeaky gate hinge in an east wind: "E-e-e-e-eleven o'clock, and a-a-a-a-ll is well, and all is well, and all is well except a drowned goat in the harbor. H-e-e-e's dead."

They had been around the world—the *Agitator* and her party—and in three months they would be tied up at St. Louis, on the Mississippi River.

From Victoria, just four years ago, they had cruised down the Pacific Coast to San Francisco, thence to Honolulu the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand and around the Horn. Cutting in and out among the ten thousand islands of the tropic and semi-

tropic Pacific, had eaten up the first year. But the motion pictures secured were the rarest and most valuable ever collected. Added to these were the wonderful deep sea shells and other marine curiosities of the South Seas. The *Agitator* could dive to any depth, and with her powerful lights turning Neptune's treasure chambers into noon-day, they robbed the jewel caskets of Amphitrite of their choicest pearls and photographed the strange marine life for the motion picture schools of the new Democracy.

From Tierra Del Fuego they slipped up the east coast of South America to Buenos Aires, Rio De Janeiro and into the South Atlantic ocean to the island of St. Helena, the speck of rock in the vast expanse of blue ocean made famous by the exile and disgrace to its lonely shores of the murderer Napoleon in 1815. Here a blear-eyed, tip-seeking old fraud conducted the visitors to the "very spot" where the Corsican beast was wont to sit dreaming France-ward, pointing out, with officious dignity, the "very rock" upon which the conquered conqueror loved to sit, daddling his royal toes in the ticklesome sudsy surf.

Up the Congo next they sailed. Then back around Cape Town to Madagascar, Zanzibar, Ceylon and Bombay.

Here they were in India, the land where religion had become mayhem, and where

social cast ranged from the strata of straw with its insignia of cow dung, to bejewelled Gaekwar in his robe of gold, his harem and slaves, sipping the wine of pearls and sitting above the law. Here it was at Delhi, back in 1911, that 200,000,000 subjugated starvelings laid belly down with faces in the dust, and spent \$100,000,000, to rehearse the coronation farce of England's bigamist king—the last parasitic monarch ever crowned—and while that barbaric fantasma was being staged, 6,000 of India's poor surrendered their lives to the Pale Lady of Starvation. Westward and northward the course now lay, through the gulf of Aden and into the Red Sea.

In the Congo they did not tarry. One month was long enough for them. Quimby Sands wanted to go there to confirm the tales of cruelty told of old King Leopold to the natives. Here he found a million square miles of tropical paradise being ravished of its natural beauties and resources as with a pestilence. Whole nations of blacks were still groaning under the yoke of chattel slavery, tens of thousands of whom had been maimed for life by the uniformed Myrmidons of this old bloody beast—King Leopold of Belgium.

“Go up the Congo,” Jason had advised his son, “and you will see sights that will make your blood run cold.” Jason knew, for he had been shanghaied aboard a

French blackbirder on the Gold Coast back in the '90s, and the thoughts of the "nigger" blood he had seen wantonly spilled nauseated and unnerved him.

For the slightest disobedience or irregularity, a hand or foot was chopped off; and for any diminution in the quantity or quality of service rendered subsequently, off came the head of the poor unfortunate to satisfy the cruel lust of one of Capitalism's most successful Christian gentlemen. All this was being done in the civilized process of "developing" the country. Of course, it was because Leopold was a great and good king that he so loved these helpless colored slaves! He loved them in the same sense and degree that the American wage-slave is loved by his Wall Street masters: It is because they love him so that they "give" him work! And it is because they love him so that they give him a "lockout" and the police club whenever the market is supplied and there is no longer a profit in loving him.

The Congo country was an open storehouse of good things free-lying on the bosom of earth, to be had for the taking. So old King Leopold furnished the financial backing of the Henry M. Stanley expedition of robbery and blood, which, in 1877, did spotter service for him, and paved the way for the international wolf-pack known as the African International As-

sociation. With this Capitalistic machine greased with the gore and sweat of both black and white slaves, at a conference in Berlin in 1885, fourteen great Powers were agreed upon the methods and tactics by which they were to pour their mercenaries and hirelings into the Congo to exploit it of its riches. This pact, or greater wolf-pack, was called the "Great Charter of the Congo Free State." Which, translated into understandable diction, meant, the free license of fourteen nations to legally devastate and murder, enslave, rob and lay waste to one of the richest lands under the shining sun.

But the Congo was not alone. What of the Boer war? England—"Merry England"—it was which slaughtered and well-nigh exterminated a whole nation of peaceful happy farmers in that awful war of commercial piracy. Jason was in New Orleans at the time, and was commissioned by the government to go up the Mississippi River for mules, which mules were to be sold to the British government and shipped to South Africa. All capitalist governments were the same, and all were engaged in the same business of enslaving the working class and in keeping the people divided that they might the more easily control and legally rob them.

But it was different now. All the great nations were Co-operative Industrial

Democracies. Socialism had come everywhere at about the same time. One exception there was, however: the great United States! The most enslaved and capital-ridden Autocracy on earth, the people were sound asleep, dreaming the sweet but archaic dreams that their grandfathers had dreamed of liberty from the tyrant rule of a foreign king.

It was their very dreams of liberty that kept them enslaved and asleep. Their liberty was liberty in their dreams only. How could they know that they were asleep when they trusted all their thinking to their rich masters? Their masters told them they were wide awake, and that they were "free-born voting sovereigns." How, then, could they know that they were slaves? Didn't their masters know best? Look at them! They wore sleek black clothes and plug hats and all that sort of thing. Of course, they were the smartest, otherwise how could they wear diamonds and stop at the best hotels? But they were waking up—that is, the children were. The Red Cadets was proof of this.

Through the Suez Canal, past Cairo and into the Mediterranean, then up the Nile they explored, and with the aid of the *Comet* and her powerful ray, they were able to give to the world the secret of the Pyramids and the Sphinx. The tombs of Cheops and his successors they were, and

were made of cement, instead of blocks of stone, as was commonly but erroneously supposed.

In those days, when these kings' tombs were built, the soul was said to be simply the breath—the only thing given up at death—and it was supposed to be breathed up, or to go into some beast, bird, reptile or vermin—anything that happened to be nearest at the moment of its flight. This creeping, crawling or fluttering thing then, according to theory, hustled away with its precious charge to somewhere or other, anywhere wherever Heaven happened to be located—temporarily, for the convenience of the sorceresses who lived by teaching it. After 5,000 years of meandering about the country in the aforesaid fashion, it was supposed to be brought back to its original owner and breathed again into the nostrils, when, straightway he would become himself or herself again, as the case might be.

In order to have all of this fine melodramatic phantasm staged and opened on schedule time, of course, the carcasses of these cruel old tyrants had to be mummified and entombed.

But that was the *belief* of the time, and it answered as well as anything to keep the ignorant submissive and satisfied with their misery. Besides, it gave the slaves work! Pyramids and sphinxes had to be built, otherwise how could they preserve

and have to worship the carion of their beloved rulers? All of this about the sorceresses and their accepted fetish was in the books, and the books were on the shelves of the Public Libraries of every nation on earth; but there they stayed, dust-laden, and were never read.

For a thousand miles through the sleepy Land of Egypt up the sluggish Nile with first *Agitator*, then *Comet*, they explored, and the sights of ancient wreck and ruin, when the shaved pates with their temporal power had taxed the people either to death or out of the country, filled them with shame and sadness. There were the stately halls and temples, upon whose vast walls still clung the priceless paintings and wonderful engravures of two thousand years ago; and upon whose crumbling floors wild beasts munched the red bones of their fresh-killed prey. On the broad cement steps, still intact, sprawled slimy crocodiles, basking in the silent desert sun, and from behind fallen columns in the swale the brooding mud hen left her nest to squawk frightfully away among the water reeds.

Next it was through the historic old Dardanelles and the Turkish Bosphorus at Constantinople, and into the Black Sea. To Naples and Rome they cruised in a day. It was from this latter ancient city that the Pope had been driven out to take

refuge from the wrath of his long-suffering people in the United States. Thither he had hied himself at the behest of his American allies, the Wall Street Administration. Taking up his new berth in the great \$3,500,000 cathedral at St. Louis, his business was to unionize all remaining religious creeds under Roman Catholic dictatorship. This accomplished, Church and State formed a clandestine collusion for the purpose of combating Socialism. All this were inevitable. The dynasties and systems of earth had ever germinated within themselves the fires of their own dissolution. It was history. This, then, was the last stand of the Beast. It marked the beginning of the end. This, the fall of the Papacy, happened in the year of 1914.

They visited Marseilles and historic old Toulon in South France, then whirled around through the Gibraltar Strait. Here, in response to a request from the Comrades of the surrounding country, the *Agitator* gave them a hand in the demolishing of that famous, or infamous rock, which Great Britain for a century had boasted could not be taken.

Modern civilization had decreed that it must be done away with to aid posterity in forgetting the crimes of war's brutal history. Wars were no more and the causes of war lingered only as a shuddery memory of the nightmare past.

Running a half-mile out to sea, the *Agitator* focused first her range finder, then turned on the mighty electro-radium pillar in its most violent form. The night was dark and the "fireworks" splendid. The performance lasted fully a minute. The noise was beyond description—it was awful! All the thunderbolts of time loaded into one huge bomb and exploded without warning could not have matched it. Imagine it if you can; but then, there are some things beyond imagination. Gibraltar, a solid mountain of rock, fused into gas in a minute! It must have been beyond belief back a half-century. This brought down a torrent of rain; and when morning came the great Rock of Gibraltar was no more.

France, in 1910, polled* 1,106,047 Socialists votes and seated 76 members in her Parliament. This was the shot that toppled the throne of greed. But greed was heavily entrenched, and only for the fact that the workers were united did they win the third Commune. This time it was not a "Paris" Commune, but a *French* Commune. They had learned their lesson well—these French hewers of wood and drawers of water. No more reaction for them. The Paris shambles of '71 was remembered.

(* Official figures presented to the author by Morris Hillquit, International Secretary of the Socialist party in 1911.)

When the Sands party arrived, all Paris, yea, all France, was in celebration of the new victory, and the coming of the Americans was welcomed with the best that human labor afforded. What impressed Jason Sands most was the sacred devotion with which these Frenchmen consecrated their lives to principle and cause. The spirit of it fired him. It was in the air. The sun reflected it. The birds sang of it. The warm showers bathed the earth with it. It was the soul of the French Revolution. He had heard his father speak of it, for his people, on his father's side, were French, and had been driven out of France for having taken part in the slaughter of the aristocrats in that same revolution. He had always felt it in the inner man of him, but he had never lived it before. Here one could sense it with every breath. Men trod lightly the pavements—pavements that had run red because labor had had to learn its lessons in red. Women still shuddered at the cry of children, and mothers paled wide-eyed to see a petal fall from a red French rose.

Standing in the Square Du Pere-Lachaise, his attention was riveted on what at first looked like an incomplete bit of masonry—an unfinished wall. Upon closer approach it proved to be a monument erected sacred to the memory of the martyred Communards, 40,000 of whom the

masters had lined up against a deadwall and shot to death. This monument was calculated to immortalize a section of the very deadwall against which the brains and hearts of those 40,000 Socialists and their wives and babies had been shot out. There were the bullet holes which had eaten deep into the very stone of that deadwall. Wonderfully wrought in bas-relief upon that wall-monument, and reflecting the silent horror and hopeless, expectant doom of those victims of a tyrant's wrath, the modern sculptor had portrayed all but the crackle of musketry and moan of death.

Here was a mother sinking to her knees, a sucking babe clasped to her nude breast, both shot through with a dozen holes. On this square of cold stone, a young herculean son of France, his head defiantly thrown back with honest pride in that he had been chosen to die for the Commune, stands holding apart his shirt front to receive the volley of lead—lead that had been mined and molded by workingmen! Here was a severed hand; there a mutilated face; on the next cube a dying patriarch, his bald skull riven and torn where the leaden missiles had ploughed it through.

But all this was only so much stone. Like what must the real thing have been! History says they uttered no cowardly alarm. But these cold stones did cry out, more eloquent cried they in their silence

than rang the death sentence that sent their righteous souls into eternity.

Jason felt a hand laid gently on his right arm, and looking down he recognized the form, but not the features of Captain Hautier. Joe was at home in Paris, but the Commune had turned him adrift. "Come," he said, "I will show you where my father stood and faced them, cursing their craven souls to Hell, after the cowards in uniform, who obey orders, had pumped into him a pound of lead. He was ironed to my mother and my sister, and when their brains splashed upon his broad breast, he held them in his mighty arms until they shot him down. But I was too young; they overlooked me in the cradle where her tender care had laid me."

They were now at the very deadwall which the sculptor of the memorial monument had tried to imitate. Here came the working class of Paris once a year to decorate the wall in memory of their martyred comrades. Some of the faded decorations still clung to pegs driven into the bullet holes. Withered garlands of flowers, crosses and wreaths there were, whose crumpled petals littered the ground at its base. Jason looked at Joe and beheld the face, not of the blythe navigator of the *Agitator*, but of a lion at bay. It was but a flash across that intervening vista to those days of slaughter. As he stood

before that mural sentinel, which loomed, a silent witness to a nation's crime, he saw not sculptured faces and breasts of stone, but the living and livid mutilated flesh and bone of those murdered Communards. Every floral cross and wreath became a rigid form; and into the dark orifices where leaden missiles had gouged out the solid stone, came the horror stare of virgin's eyes, alternating with the steadfast gaze of the militant heroes who had scorned the blindfold rag.

He saw his father as his mother and sister must have seen him, a battered god, glowing with triumph in the hour of defeat; crushed but never conquered; killed, perchance, but living still, while the corpses fell beside him with every volley from the firing squad, in the mad dream that ran riot through his imaginative brain. Fantasy possessed him; and mingled with the hoarse curses of the veterans grown old in toil, he could hear the death-gasp of the women and children shot down like herded beasts in the dust.

Born with the blood-infusion of the Commune in his veins—a heritage nurtured with his mother's milk—he was a Communard; and he was living the reincarnated battles of his crucified compatriots, and awaiting in his fancy, as did his sire in reality, for the volley that should bring him down. Yonder rode the haughty com-

mander, whose shrill voice rang cruelly in the sun-risen dawn, as between the long lines of manacled citizens his black charger pranced. "Step out!" he could hear the buzzard hiss, "you look intelligent; step out!" Which mandate meant: you are to be shot to death against a deadwall! And the citizen thus addressed would take three paces forward. "Away with him"—or her, would scream* And thus perished 40,000 Paris workfolk, whose ultra-optimism and lack of self-wisdom had cost them both their lives and their cause.

That was forty years ago; but its history could never die. "Step out, you look intelligent," unconsciously lisped the ashen lips of the Frenchman; and Jason repeated mechanically, "step out, you look intelligent!" To be intelligent, that was the crime, for to be intelligent was to be a menace to the authority of tyranny.

Jason thought of the Dick Military Law in America, with its mandate of "shoot or be shot at the order of the President!" Then a sickness came stealing over him, and Joe saw in his face that he had aged.

It was twilight when they turned to go, and with the falling shadows and falling dew came strange whisperings through the

(* The military fiend who gave the orders to have the Communards shot, and whose name, for mercy's sake, is here suppressed, because he subsequently became a Socialist and a member of the French Parliament.)

stilly night, whisperings such as only Communards may hear.

Through the English Channel they sailed and up the Thames to London, then into the Baltic Sea to St. Petersburg, where the last of the Russian butchers had been driven into the sea. The German Empire next they visited, after which a year was spent among the lesser nations, teaching them co-operation and helping them on to their new Socialistic feet.

In Berlin they visited the great national Zoo, and had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of "Dutch" Bill, the subdued "war lord" and deposed Emperor, who had been given a job as animal feeder. For Bill just simply could not live away from both blood and gunpowder, and the comrades were disposed to be generous.

Now here they were in the waters of Newfoundland, with but one more great mission unperformed. This accomplished, Jason Sands, together with his son, would revisit the old home high up among the New Hampshire mountains.

In each port visited, they had been the recipients of every known form of welcome from the united hosts of the I. I. Ds. As they sailed out past the "links" into the open sea, their farewell from St. Johns was no less demonstrative. Jason watched the receding city on the hill, aflame with

red silk banners, suddenly cut off from view as they rounded the southwestern promontory. St. Pierre, Miquelon, loomed up before them as they dropped Cape Race and shot across Placentia Bay. Jason remembered that other September back there on the "Broken Bone," when he had packed sack and fought wolves that night on the ice-wall. Also he thought of Leland Tannerhill, and wondered what he must be thinking of him and his promise to be home early in that September now four years agone.

But it was of Ben Page that he most was thinking. What of his old partner, whom he had left at the top of the world and alone? Suppose Ben had followed him and fell in with the grey devils he had baffled? Or what if he had never returned from the "Hedgehog?" How could he know that Leland had ever received that letter? Perhaps Ben had succeeded in getting out, and that he had made his way to Raven Roost in safety, and that he was still there waiting for him! He reproved himself that he had not cleared up this matter at once and set himself right with his conscience and his old friends. But here they were foaming past St. Pierre, the *Agitator* throwing up a white crest of boiling spray in a wake that aimed northward of Cape Ray and the Anticosti Islands.

It was one of those dreamy, sunny afternoons when men are glad with life. The sea, oft so wild and turbulent here in the St. Lawrence Gulf, rolled drowsily and peacefully, while myriads of feathered sea things of every name and nature squawked and scaled the cliffs and sky, afruit at the strange porpoise-like monster that ripped so swiftly through them as they skimmed the foam-crested swells.

Miquelon was deserted. Once the rendezvous of "wool-pullers," with the coming of Socialism smuggling was a trade that no longer paid; consequently the business was abandoned. St. Pierre was the headquarters and had belonged to France. A bald knob of barren rock, without a leaf or shrub of green to relieve the forbidding aspect of its ashen grey, it was an uninviting haven to any whose ideals rose higher than the code of the blackjack and the ethics of the thief. Here was "made," bottled and labeled with the importers' label of a fictitious French winer, "BEST OLD EXTRA DRY CHAMPAGNE," etc., which sold well to the tin horn sports of Boston and New York as the "clear quill!"

Smugglers were seldom caught. They were indeed "wool-pullers." How could they be expected to be punished when the officials of every government on the civil-

ized earth were the ringleaders of the smuggler fraternity, and who furnished the government stamp of cancellation at the "port of entry" to the moonshiners to be used as needed?

As they feathered foam through the Strait of Belle Isle and dashed into the Labrador Current, Jason acquainted Captain Joe with his wish, and to his surprise he found the brusque navigator eager for the adventure. The crew, also, he found ready to a man for the search, although they had been absent years from their respective homes without rest or furlough. It was only a matter of a few thousand miles, his son reassured him, a mere outing of not more than a week at the outside. Besides, it was right on their way to the north pole, whither they were bound.

They would find Ben Page, positively declared Quimby Sands to his adoring father, for nothing could elude the eye of the little *Comet*, and he would pilot her himself. Jason should go along, and if still in the North country, they would bring him safely back.

Through Davis Strait and Baffin's Bay and out into the frozen Arctic Ocean sped the wonderful thing of fire, frightening the Eskimos along the old trail of the former (fake) pole hunters, melting her way as she went. Ice was no hindrance to the

progress of the *Agitator*. She could dissipate an ice floe ten miles in advance with her *finder* charged and focused, and it was beautiful the way she mowed down the bergs.

They had squandered a full thirty days' running in and out among the bays and islands, from the Hudson Bay to Beaufort Sea, astonishing and amusing the natives, and being in turn entertained by them. Tales of frightful cruelty and exploitation of them by the pole-fakers they told. They were not pole-hunters, but thieves. They came to the settlements with their ships laden to the waterline with cheap trash for trading. A package of needles costing ten cents in Boston or New York fetched a polar bear skin; and for a cast-iron sheath-knife an Eskimo gave up a black fox. Candy, whisky and tobacco of the cheapest quality, these great American humbugs had swapped off on the helpless and unsophisticated children of the snows, carrying away in return all their store of fur, ivory and curios, along with all the best dogs, sledges and young men.

Each year the ships came laden with trashy trinkets, departing to leave behind the pallor of poverty, shaming the cold red glow of the somber midnight sun. There was no limit to Capitalism. It reached its taloned tentacles out to the remotest corners of earth, feeling among the cold crags

and colder icebergs, it cruelly picked the pockets of the simple frost folk, leaving them to strive hungrily and forlornly through the frozen six months night.

Then back would go the "explorer," or rather, the *exploiters*, to civilization, to be wined and dined and decorated with college degrees, insignias of honor and gold braid. Society women kissed them; newspapers lauded them; cities presented them with their keys, and the rostrum welcomed them. To one of these eminent pole-finders, the Thieves' League of St. Louis once gave \$20,000 for a lecture at its centennial celebration. Later some one yelled "fake!" whereupon the Thieves' League came out with the astonishing information to the effect that they had known all along he was a fake, but that they knew he would draw a crowd!

All this was said to be scientific research! And the people fell for it regularly, as they fell for all the rest of the snides and humbugs upon which their muddled mentalities were annually fed.

But all that thing was a brainstorm of history. Here was the *Agitator* at the magnetic vortex under the North Star. They had found Ben Page, frozen to death, and he had been dead in the snow four years. Now it was a dash for the pole.

It was the last of the summer solstice in the land of the midnight sun, and over the

frozen end of the world was coming the long cold sleep.

They were in latitude 85° north, on the 75th meridian. Here both mercury and the spirit glasses froze, and the cold was immeasurable. Everything was dark with the blackness of ink, save for the Aurora Borealis, which flashed only at intervals, then subsided, like the geysers of the Yellowstone. With the power of all her electro-radium currents playing full blast into the ice-pack, and with Jack Philips, Doctor Spanto and his Indian wife, Jason Sands, his son and little Yama Yama huddled around the *mirrorscope* in the operating room, Captain Joe signaled Billy Self for speed, and away they shot, straight into a mountain of ice and snow.



"At full speed straight into a mountain of ice!"

CHAPTER X.

THE RAWHIDE THONG.

Farewell! Farewell! the sands run low,
The Hand of Time the Hour hath marked;
A doleful knell tolls o'er the snow
As on a mystic sea, embarked
On phantom ship, goes out into the Night
A spectral voyager on his spectral flight!

Dimly in a window on the hillside, a smoky lamp burned low into the gray dawn. Faithful and long it had kept its beacon vigil for one who never came. Down the bald mountain screeched the wintry winds, piling the white snow high against the oaken door and sifting in unwelcomely through the generous crevices of the weather-beaten old mansion, it built white pyramids on the worn floor and frosted the black coals in the cold fireplace.

The window was thick with frost; but the warmth of the smoky little lamp had kept its glowing shape melted through though the night was cold.

A lone mouse, spurned on by hunger, came out of her hole in the corner, scampered timidly toward the open kitchen door, struck the thin frost flakes and scampered back again to disappear into the cellar from whence she came.

It was a bitter north-easter in the New Hampshire hills, the fiercest of all the year.

Stretched upon an ancient patchwork coverlet, a great brown hand jerked palsiedly. It was not as brown as in other days, and where once the horns of honest toil thickened the broad palm, the flabby yellow skin now hung loosely around the hubbly bones. On a pillow, frayed, and soiled with age and unceasing service, shook feebly from side to side a white head across whose sunken temple ran a deep red scar.

It was Leland Tannerhill!

On the night the packages came from Alaska, bringing the letters from Jason Sands and Ben Page, Leland had trimmed and filled the little lamp and placed it in the window where his old friend might see it when he should come over the hill a mile away. Vaguely he knew that a welcome beacon in the window of a loved one had lightened many a weary foot, though none had ever gleamed for him. Stanley Lark had marveled at the delicate pains with which the thoughtful farmer polished the globe and turned the wick just so high ere they left for the lecture on that eventful night; but when again he turned into the lane by the red schoolhouse, that lamp beckoned a joyous greeting to him.

When the shyster lawyer, Jibbs, fled the town after hurling the missile that felled

the good old man, he left the village in a state of awful terror and confusion. Never had there been such excitement. Rumors, red and terrible, were rife on every tongue. Murder, arson, abduction and robbery were included in the program of crime, and all these were systematically charged to and fastened—momentarily on the Socialists! Next morning out came the *Aberrant* with a lying *Extra* which wound up with the usual capitalistic coloring in a flaring article with a full page caption and all in heavy black type:

SOCIALIST RIOTERS TURN LECTURE INTO HOLOCAUST OF MURDER.

GUN FIGHTER FROM TEXAS MEETS HIS MATCH IN BLOODY DUEL WITH OUR HEROIC SHERIFF LARDING!

OLD TURNCOAT TANNERHILL, THE RAVEN ROOST HERMIT, BEATEN AND LEFT FOR DEAD!

Madison Gibbs Missing, Windows Shattered with Flying Lead. Six Maimed Men in Hospital! Many Arrests Already Made, with More to Follow!

On another page appeared the following editorial, as if one malevolent lie had to be backed up by another:

“FODDER FOR THE NOOSE AND THE DUNGEON.

“* * * * The fact is, Leland Tannerhill is and always has been a drunkard. We say it literally and unequivocatingly—a low-down drunkard.

“On Saturday noon he drove up to the Tavern, his General Lyon trotter all afoam, and so beastly drunk that he could not stand. Falling out of his buggy into the arms of the proprietor, he had to be carried inside and put to bed. Only for the charity of kindly disposed citizens—a notable characteristic of our people, by the way—his spent and affrighted animal would have run away, so eager it seemed to be rid of its cruel master. Evidence of the horrible beating it had received revealed itself in the long rope-like welts that ran from flank to withers the length of its beautiful black body. It is a crying shame that, under the virtuous folds of Old Glory and our sacred Republican institutions, so shameful an outrage can find tolerance in our model city.

“Now, we feel it won’t be necessary for the *Aberrant* to dwell further on the ungodly record of this old hypocrite. The history of the Tannerhills and the Sands’ is too well known to require further comment. However, suffice it to say in passing, and lest we forget, that old Tannerhill’s red-headed sister was notoriously a com-

mon bawd. After wrecking the life of our most respected and beloved citizen and banker, Mr. Pert Perry, whom she with her cattish cunning succeeded in infatuating, she died having a bastard kid by Jason Sands. This Jason Sands, by the way, was another of the same stripe of vermin and great cronies with the Tannerhills until he ran away to avoid fathering the brat. Since his disappearing act twenty years or more ago, no trace of him has ever reached these parts. Rumor has it, however, that he worked all over the country mostly in shoe factories under the alias of Alfred Allen; but this has never been confirmed.

“At the Town Hall last night, mob violence and red-throated anarchy ran riot. The Socialists-anarchists, in the height of a florid outburst from the big Texan fire eater, leaped to their feet, shot out the lights, and in the turmoil of mad confusion following shouts of ‘to hell with the constitution’; ‘down with women and children’; ‘divide up the property’; ‘damn the capitalists,’ etc., they succeeded in fatally wounding old Tannerhill—one of their accursed dupes; damaging the Town Hall—the city’s property—to the tune of hundreds of dollars, and in some mysterious manner making away with our most promising young lawyer, Madison Jibbs. The two Boston boys are lying at death’s door in the Hardhack hospital, and a disgrace

has been heaped upon this pious community that a hundred years cannot efface.

“A further account of the devilish doings of these bloody disturbers of the public confidence and morality will be found on another page in this issue. It is the hope of the editor of this, the people’s faithful journal, that all good citizens will unite in a grand effort to bring the law to bear, purge our skirts of this crying shame and live down the disgrace we have so innocently suffered at the hands of these cloven-hoofed degenerates. Let this God-fearing people arise and scour the country for these foreign terrorists, that they may be brought to justice as an example and warning to others of their ilk.”

This was the *Aberrant*. Nay, this was the Press. Thus it was that public opinion was moulded—and made moldy—by the lying Scribes and Pharisees of Capitalism. From out their whitened sepulchres through these vitriol-tongued mouthpieces issued forth such as this and voluminous other vituperative misinformation, until the unthinking populace had become prejudiced, poisoned, and turned like tempered steel against both truth and reason.

But the *Aberrant* was not a marker in comparison with the daily press. There were pandering sycophants in the editorial sanctums of these mercenary old journalistic prostitutes beside which the puerile

one-horse editor of the *Aberrant* looked like an angel chick just pipping the shell.

For four of the bitterest months that ever mortal flesh and blood bore up under, Leland Tannerhill clung to life. When the bloody stone brought him down, Rec Cotton saw and knew the thing to be done. Rec was a happy-go-lucky good fellow, who knew how to both laugh and fight. His heart was big and always in the right place. He had known Leland Tannerhill since his first memories, and he knew he was a good man. While others wrung their hands and whined their "poor fellows" and "too bads" into ears that heard not, Rec lit out for a doctor and to fetch Black Raven.

With the hurt hurriedly dressed, his head swathed in bandages improvised from the Texan's suit case, Leland absolutely refused to stay, announcing that he was ready and feeling able to take the eight-mile ride back home. Rec offered to go along and drive; but the plainsman needed no introduction to horses, and with his wounded comrade securely encircled in his long left arm, he straightened the eager young stallion around the north-east corner back of the old brick Post Office and headed straight for Raven Roost.

The moon was just dropping down behind the Bridgewater mountains. Like a huge prehistoric serpent lay the long, narrow mill pond above the old grist mill dam.

Crouching black and shadowy along the roadside, dorsaled and scaled with snags and stumps, it looked like a sleeping dragon mounted by sleeping spooks. The colt was fresh and only the darker objects were visible, momentarily, as they sped on into the night.

“Give him his head, Comrade; I always do. Rave knows the way and never makes a blunder.’ Hosses sees in the night,” weakly volunteered the wounded man, and Stanley let a foot of the lines slip through his fingers. That was a familiar sign, and the horse understood. He evinced his gratitude by a playful toss of the head and a marked increase in speed.

It was late, as time is reckoned in the country, and they had a straight road. Black Raven, though only a colt, was one of those intelligent animals which learn from experience how to take advantage of reserve energy. When he cut around Al Willoughby’s and pitched over the gravelly knoll above Eben Howe’s, he was trotting beautifully, taking the little buggy along with its two heavy occupants smoothly with his great strength, and at a three-minute clip, which he had never for once slackened. But when he lit into the stretch of straight, level road at the foot of Winding Hill, the splendid creature fairly flew! He seemed scarcely to touch the ground. With this spurt of speed was generated a momentum

which carried them half way to the summit, and within one pitchpole of the old watering-trough. This gained, he drank deeply of the gurgling water that flowed freely out of a cool spring in the hillside and tumbled from a wooden spout into the mossy trough, to go spilling generously over the brim and off down the mountain on its winding way to the lake.

The Westerner knew how to handle trouble. He had been there before. Up to this point in the journey little had been said, for there really was nothing relevant to talk about of which both men were not equally familiar. Besides, neither man was in a very talkative mood.

The night was cool, but Stanley was hot—hot in more ways than one—and he wanted some of that laughing water that he knew was cold and sweet and pure.

Wishing to appear conservatively unsolicitous, though inwardly he was deeply concerned for his companion's condition, he ventured, offhandedly: "How goes the battle, old boy; shall we have a drink?" To his great amazement the only response was a childish giggle, uncanny and machine-like! More than anything else, it resembled the mechanical jangle of a phonograph reproducing the record of a laughing boy. The next thing Stanley knew, and without warning, over the wagon wheel went Leland Tannerhill, with the agility of a mon-

key, falling face down where the trough overflowed in the weeds and mud.

To prevent this last calamity were impossible, so unexpectedly had it occurred. The Texas leaped after the delirious sufferer; the colt ran away, and there they were!

With the horse and buggy gone, and in the dark, the task of getting the helpless and wounded man home was no holiday celebration, even for a man of Stanley Lark's size and strength. He could toss a bale of cotton, or shoulder a mule; but here was a man who was his match, and the man was out of his head! He babbled like a schoolboy, laughed like a maniac, and absolutely refused to budge an inch away from that old watering trough.

The aim of the shyster, Jibbs, had been at him, Stanley knew that. That it had found a different mark mattered not in the least to the cowardly perpetrator. The stone had done its work, and the cur had made good his escape.

“Here, Jason. Catch him! Catch him! —that green frog. Cracky! ain’t it hot? Let’s peel off and get’n the tub!” These and other childish incoherencies were some of the wild wanderings voiced in rapid succession, as the demented victim of a would-be assassin, in fancy, played again as he had played there in his boyhood with his one male companion in the shade by the

old watering-trough. He was living back in the yesteryears of his youth, and Stanley Lark was Jason Sands—of course! Who else could he be? For he never played with any other boy.

It mattered not that it was dark. He guessed he knew where he was and what he was doing! It was hot out there in the sun, he told his companion, and when they wanted him to spread hay they could sing out! He addressed Stanley as “Jase,” and they were going to have some fun in that old trough and that’s all there was about it!

The Socialist agitator knew something of crazy people. Strategy counted for more than force in a crisis like this, he decided, so began overhauling his wits for a cunning to match the cunning of insanity. The situation was becoming clear to him. He must humor his unfortunate comrade, take advantage of every opening, and gradually win him around deftly with some sort of harmless deception, now that he was helplessly a madman, and therefore irresponsible.

They were high up on the hillside and the sky was clear. The moon had gone down; but large objects were more or less distinctly visible in the starlight, mingled with the shadowy forms of the trees by the roadside. Stanley could make out that Leland was getting his clothes off, and he hadn’t as yet taken that drink of water. Here was a

chance to test a trick and he lost no time in availing himself of it.

“Come on, Leal, let’s have a drink ‘fore we get in,” he invited, assuming his most careless manner, speaking rapidly at the same time and in his most captivating, boyish tones. His change of manner acted like magic. The battle was won. It was now only a question of time and the application of tactics.

“All right, Jase; you first. Catch it out of the spout; tastes better,” came the instant rejoinder, and Stanley smiled in spite of himself and obeyed the command.

Nothing like that drink of crystal water that sparkled coldly in the autumn starshine had ever passed his lips! In the years that came and went he often thought of it, and once while lost in a sand storm on the funeral trail across the baked desert of Death Valley, the memory of it came to him, with his tongue black and swollen, driving him water mad.

He was still drinking of it when his injured companion, giggling and prattling, advanced to the far side of the overflowing trough and leaned forward, white and nude as an iceberg. What was to be done! It would never do to let a sick man jump into that trough. It was like ice water. It might mean his death. Raven Roost was not so far; why not seize and overpower him at once and stop the farcical per-

formance? He had taken the case in hand, promising to see his friend through; but he had not bargained for such as this. Nevertheless, he had gone on record. And a sick man—a comrade—was his charge.

He never knew just why he did it, but the thought flashed up in his brain like lightning, and like lightning out flashed his hands into the trough, splashing gallons of the cold water flush in the other's face. It was an heroic remedy. But, and as its author ever after maintained, its administration was, if not cowardly, then unbrave, to say the least, and startling. However, it did the work as, most probably, nothing else under the circumstances could have done.

What transpired during the next half hour always was a mystery to Stanley Lark. But it was all very clear to Leland Tannerhill. With the douche of cold water came the return of sanity, and with this departed every ounce of his great physical strength. Uttering a piteous groan, he clapped both hands to his bruised temple and tottered backward. But his alert guardian was there, and in some mysterious way cushioned the fall.

During the lucid intervals between periods of delirium spanning the black chasm from September to December, waiting for the fulfillment of Jason Sands' promise, the one inspiring memory had been the splendid heroism and staunch

friendship of Stanley Lark. Stanley had stayed with him a whole week after the unfortunate Town Hall calamity, cancelling his lecture dates, he worked manfully and alone to restore him to his former self; for, in a measure, he could not help feeling partly to blame along with the shyster lawyer Gibbs. Had he not invited him to that fatal lecture the thing might not have happened.

Leland never forgot with what apparent ease and patient tenderness the brawny plainsman lifted him and bore him home in his arms that night from the watering-trough. Black Raven had gone straight to the big barn doors and waited. It was his first runaway, and it was a good thing they had left the gate open at the foot of the lane, Leland told his rescuer, when the affair was over and he lay restfully once more in his old-fashioned rope bed.

Stanley's first thought upon reaching Raven Roost was for a doctor. But when he made known to Leland his intention to return to the village for one the rugged mountain hermit protested vigorously. "What's the use, friend," he objected. "I ain't goin' ter be sick? I'm jist kinder laid off fer'er spell, 'pears like. Tain't no marter ter make a great touse about. Besides, I hain't had no doctor a pill-putterin' 'round here since no knowin' when. I never did have much use fer 'em myself,

since the fever had me under cover. Old Doctor Tucker used to come over the mountain from Hardhack ter see mother, and they had him for Erm; but he hain't been here since they went, and most likely he's been took off his self by this time. We've all got ter go at the apainted time, brother. Don't be afeared. I ain't, but I do wish Jase would come fust; someway suthin' tells me I hain't long fer ter stay now, and mebbe God knows best."

The next day was the Holy Sabbath.

Over in Ashworth the mill whistles were silent, but there was an unusual stir in the sleepy streets and the church bells rang with excessive vigor and persistence. Especially furious clanged the great bell in the tall steeple of the Catholic House of God on the hill. There was something in the wind, everybody knew that. They always rang that way for a fire, and once they had done so when a Bengal tiger escaped from the Dingaling Sisters Circus; but on this quiet September Sabbath morning there were neither circuses nor fires in town. What did it mean?

There was "Dirty Dowie" and young Ramo the rummy out with the *Aberrant Extra!* Evidently it was a good thing—for them. They were tearing wildly through the streets, madly yelling, "A-a-a-a-b'rran, tuxtry. A-a-a-all about th' Socialist riot!" It seemed their very lives depended on the

sale of each and every single accursed copy.

It was a great message that went up to God from the gold-crossed spire of the Ashworth Catholic Church on that autumn Sunday morning! Father Glennon, the good priest, was at his best. He told his gentle flock all about the wicked Socialists and what Socialism was! Many of the more progressive of the bead-prayers had attended the forbidden lecture the night before, and now they were attending another. They had disobeyed the injunction of the priest-craft, and the holy father had gotten wind of it. The very air was pregnant with forebodings of dire calamity! Every ear was strained, all were wide-eyed, and every mouth hung open.

Father Glennon knew what Socialism was! He told them so! That was proof enough! All they had to do was to believe it, and this they did, *in toto!* It was immense! And it could be seen that the virus took! It was like swill cast before hungry swine; they ate it up—head, hide, horns and tail!

Of course, that he had never read—not even seen—a single scientific work on the philosophy of Socialism made not the slightest difference. Socialism was not included in the canons of the toe-suckers, and that was enough to know about it! Papal encyclicals always contained references to it, of late, but such references were only

for the purpose of admonishing that this evil thing, Socialism, must not be thought about nor read.

Father Glennon was a good man. He had never committed murder, as far as was known, and that half of younger Hinkleville resembled him only intensified the loyalty of the young wives of his parish, and aroused no suspicion in the minds of their scapular-charmed husbands. Besides, he was good looking, fat and oily. Well nourished, he looked satisfied and exuded an opulential fragrance that lent charm to the external grace of his unctuous *avoir-dupois*. In other words, he was bland and solid, and his appearance made a "hit." Moreover, he was dearly beloved and highly respected, as good men should be. That his word was taken for law was not to be wondered at. So, when he told his congregation that the Socialists were not men but *devils*, who could be rash enough to doubt him?

To the rich thieves comprising the business element of his Rome-ruled herd, he turned, with the dangerous intelligence that Socialism would destroy incentive! To the slaving beasts of burden—the "ninety and nine" per cent.—he loudly proclaimed that Socialism would compel them to "divide up!" The humor of the paradox, singularly enough, was lost on the farmed-out intelligence of his insolvent citizenry. None of them owned anything, the most of

them owed something, but none of them knew that all of them were less than thirty days from the poorhouse, should they chance to lose their precious jobs!

All the *Aberrant* had said he repeated to them. Then he told them a whole lot of other things for which the *Aberrant* hadn't the space. Socialism was ungodly, he explained. He would prove it to them, all unmindful of the superfluity of such proof. To do this he quoted adequately from the hierarchical screeds, wherein, as by the Holy Bible, anything can be proved, disproved, defended or condemned.

He told them that Socialism was born in a barroom on a free-lunch counter; sired, he said, by delirium tremens; wet-nursed by anarchy and christened in a mug of sour beer! O, he had its pedigree all right, he assured them of that, even if he hadn't any respect for his tongue! He characterized Socialism as the "Red Spectre of Discontent," and said it was rapidly rearing its horned head over the "glorious land of the free" like a destroying angel!

At this his worshippers were horrified, and looked it. They stared at one another, shuddered and crossed themselves, an old woman fainted and the good priest trooped bravely on! When the holy man of God had finished, the Socialist philosophy was demolished; all the agitators, including Stanley Lark, had been drawn and quar-

tered, burned at the stake or hanged, as pleased his pious fancy, and the avenging God of Romanism rode triumphant astride a white thunder cloud over a chastened and humble world!

The editor of the *Aberrant* was not a Catholic. But he was a capitalist—from his throat up—and he was there. He knew on which side his bread was buttered! All the Protestant churches were poor, having dwindled until their following consisted of the venerable old, a few female scandal-mongers of the middle aged and their adopted and impressed progeny, and a few sallow things of the masculine gender buttoned up neatly in black frock coats. But there was scarcely a healthy-looking individual among the extraneous farrago of insipid human tailings. While on the contrary, the Catholic church was powerful; had and knew how to get the “stuff,” and could “deliver the goods” on election day.

It was a beautiful fall Sabbath up on the wooded hills, and Stanley slept like an anchor in a calm. At ten o’clock he slipped off the old hair lounge, and the fall awoke him. But Leland slept on. The Texan did the chores after the manner of the West; rustled up a prodigious layout of coarse but wholesome grub for two, then he called Leland. Hearing no response, he repeated the summons several times. Finally he re-entered the room where the bachelor of

sorrows lay still in the soft shaded light, laid a hand gently on the white forehead and spoke. There was no movement or sound to indicate that he had heard, and the effort was repeated, this time a little louder, and accompanied by a gentle shaking of the head. Still there came no indication of consciousness, and the only sign of life manifest was in the deep-drawn breathing that lifted the huge chest evenly with the respiratory puissance of a sleeping god.

At 12 o'clock Stanley went back to the kitchen and attacked the lunch. He knew he was hungry; but never before had he eaten like that. In just fifteen minutes he had swept the board of everything but the dishes, going back twice to the brick oven for more beans—and oh! such beans! Baked beans, that's what they were, and they were such baked beans as only a New Englander can bake. Stanley had spoken in every town, city and jerk-water cross-roads in the United States, and he had eaten *some* baked beans! He had come to know that the term was an elastic one, possessed of as many meanings as there were states, and as many variations of each separate meaning as there were towns in each separate state. The cooking of beans, like the shaping of intelligence, was largely environmental. On the plains they were whatever the packing houses had happened to wrap tin around, and were labeled

“Boston Baked Beans,” whether canned in Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City or Honolulu.

Raven Roost mansion, like all the old puritanic homes, was built to stand. Its frame was of oak timbers a foot square, hewn and mortised by hand in the days before saw mills and machinery were known in the land. In each of the four corners stood an oaken pillar two feet in diameter at the base, tapering to twelve inches at the top. Out into the finished rooms protruded the sharp angles of these great posts, presenting the appearance of the architecture of a wooden ship. The ten-foot brick chimney with its four separate compartments was built pyramidal up from a twenty-foot base on the very cellar bottom. In each of the four great rooms on the main floor an open fireplace served the double purpose of supplying warmth in winter and ventilation in summer. Built into the chimney above the one in the kitchen was a big brick oven—big enough to accommodate a cord-wood stick, and variously used to smoke hams, try out fat in killing time, and as a hiding place for the jam. Also it was here that the regular Saturday baked beans and brown bread were cooked; and as Leland Tannerhill was more vegetarian than cannibal, it was more for this than for any other purpose that he had kept it in

commission after the advent of the modern cooking range.

Ever since the Pilgrim Fathers first hacked rye among the stumps and stones on the New England coast, it had been the custom each Friday morning to heat up the brick oven. This heating up process had become a fine art among the old standbys, and consisted of a stuffing with dry beach or maple, cordwood length, touching off with a handful of pitchwood, then to be left alone, the dampers set just so, and just so long. The gathering of this pitchwood was also an important factor in the process of bean baking, and a year's supply of it was always sagaciously laid in store from the roots of dead Norway pines on the mountain.

Each Friday night at bed time the ashes had to be drawn, and with the great oven a cherry red, the beans and brown bread were sealed up in it and left without further attention for twenty-four hours.

“Bakin’ beans in the ground may be well enough fer some folks; but give me my old brick oven and plenty o’ good dry wood, and come rain or snow they ain’t no outs about it, and it never fails,” Leland had boasted the night before, as he dumped a pint of red molasses on top of an eight-quart stone pot of yellow-eyes and clamped down the lid. “Some par-boils ‘em fust, but that spiles ‘em fer me. I allus soak ‘em over night, ‘n soak a pound of half fat

and half lean pork ter get the salt out, then slap the whole thing into this 'ere old pot, fill 'er up with water'n add the West Injie last."

Leland had been a day behind in heating up the oven on this occasion, and Stanley had been a witness to the remarkable performance of "banking beans and brown bread the last thing they did before leaving the night before for the lecture in the Town Hall. He had seen and eaten what was called baked beans, which same consisted of what was left after making bean soup, strained and baked an hour or two in a biscuit tin along with a few thin strips of bacon for flavoring, and called "Herald" on the menus in their eating houses. Also he knew that the cowboys fried them; but the St. Louis method had always puzzled him. Baked beans in the city that wanted "a million" always tasted the way a garbage wagon smells, and might easily have been mistaken for bits of raw potato warmed up in greasy dishwater. No wonder they slandered Boston. Any one who had ever been obliged to satisfy hunger with this inimitable concoction should be pardoned for such slander.

"Them yarler-eves is the Torsey bean, gi'n father by old Mountain Pete. He traded a jug o' sap beer fer the seed with Torsey, way back, and I tell you what they do beat all and don't you forget it. Thet old cracked pot has baked a hundred bushel

on 'em. Jason Sands has eat 'em out o' thet air, and Erm, she——" Here Leland had broken off in his baked bean reminiscences, drawing the back of his hand across his eyes pitiously as he braced the long iron poker against the high oven door. When Stanley drew them forth at noon the next day and poured them out steaming into a brown earthen crock, they were hot, fat and juicy, each bean retaining its shape intact, inviting with their rich, nut-brown color, fragrant with a rare appetizing odor, and mellow as the ripe lips of first love. Stanley Lark never forgot those baked beans; but often in his speeches he would refer to the incident, and always with a longing, a longing that came regularly on each Saturday night but that was never thereafter satisfied.

At 7 o'clock Leland awoke, as far as outward appearances indicated, well as ever. As might be expected, however, there was a bad swelling in the left temple and great soreness of the whole side of his head; but he chatted good-naturedly, ate a remarkably big supper, and when the bell in the little church over among the white stones began ringing for the regular Sunday evening service, he took down the little black bible from the mantel shelf and cast an inviting look at his comrade from the southwest. How could Stanley Lark refuse him? Here was an innocent and pious man, a man who believed on a personal God Al-

mighty, worshipping him as he was taught in childhood to do and revering what was said to be His Holy Word as he found it in the little black bible, and firmly believing in a home for the good and faithful over the Black Ocean.

It had been many a day since Stanley Lark sat in a pew. The son of a preacher, he was raised a Christian, all the dogma of capitalistic orthodoxy having been crammed into him, he could recall a time when he was pickled with religion from outer cuticle to inner caecum. He had eaten it, drunk of it, walked under its iron rod and slept on a bed of it. Moreover, it subsequently had oozed from his very pores like sweat until he both smelled and tasted of it. They early saw that he was made of good preach timber, and so straightway packed him off to a college of theology from which he graduated with highest honors. Then began his pulpit career. It was a rapid cruise, full of snags—for his flock—and soon over. “Heresy,” that was the charge, and at the church meeting following he had been requested to resign. “Socialism,” it should have been, but heresy they had called it, and it sufficed as well as anything, just so he was gotten rid of, for there was no place in the pulpit for a Socialist. But there was room in the Socialist movement for preachers. And now here he was accompanying Leland Tannerhill to the little country church to hear God’s appointed apostle

teach of brotherly love, peace on earth and good will among men, and how that the Son of God rebuked the accusers of a Magdalene with the challenge: "He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone."

Before entering the maple growth by the deep-worn path at the corner of the old house, they gathered pinks and tea roses which Leland insisted upon carrying, handling them caressingly and tenderly and protecting them with great care. At the far end of the path they came out of the woods and climbed the little hill by the same old meeting house where Jason Sands had sung in the choir with Erma when they were young.

Between a weeping willow and a silver birch they halted. Leland fell on his knees and both men bared their heads. Chiseled deep on a white headstone was the following inscription in bold square letters:

ERMA
WIFE OF JASON SANDS
* *
MATED IN PERFECT LOVE
* *
WEDDED IN SACRED
MATRIMONY
* *
MARTYRED
* *
SHE CAME HERE TO REST
DEC. 25th, 1890

Jason had had the stone lettered and shipped from Boston to Leland, and Leland saw to its erection in spite of the old folks, who fought against it bitterly. It was the first time he had ever crossed them, and the last. The quarrel had hastened the inevitable, Leland knew that, but no pang of remorse had he ever felt because of it. He loved his sweet sister because she was pure, and good. Next to her came Jason, his one male companion, who had claimed her for his mate. His dead father and mother had loved their children, but they were old and set, and in their senility they had tried to apply archaic measures to new ideas, which has ever been the error of the race.

Placing the flowers with trembling hands on her grave, the bereaved brother raised the little black bible over her sleeping clay and cried out in tremulous tones: "O blessed Jesus, if you be still the friend o' sich as we, and hain't gi'n us all over to Satan ter be destroyed, help her Jason, and pint out the way to me fer to come here whole beside her at last. I know she's waitin', and I want her to meet me yender if I'm fit ter go. Give me strength, Lord, and I'll try to hold out. It ain't askin' much. Amen."

Leland never missed the Sunday evening service. He always sat alone in the old family pew, unnoticed by the better-than-thou congregation, especially since the

young city minister came. But to-night the Tannerhill pew was the center of attraction. It was coming, Stanley could see that! The minister had a telephone, the only one between Raven Roost and Ashworth, and the wires were still smoking. Unsophisticated and ever optimistic, Leland noticed nothing unusual in the leopardine demeanor of the dapper little divine, as he eyed him coldly from his seat behind the old pulpit.

Stanley swept the interior of the musty old sanctuary with swift perception. Down in front sat the "summer folks" from the cities, their costly opera capes flung carelessly over white shoulders. They looked out of place among the rustics, but they it had been who had brought the young preacher from the city, and the checks he got cashed at The Bridge bore the name of a well-known banking syndicate of Boston. That the head of the aforesaid banking institution was a notorious stock gambler who trafficed in the very bread of starving millions detracted not at all from the enjoyment of his tainted pelf.

After the usual prelude of a half hour's doleful psalm singing, the holy disciple of the meek and lowly Carpenter of Nazareth arose. Deftly and with suave legerdemain he slyly juggled the typewritten manuscript on the open bible before him, and the ex-preacher from Texas whispered to Leland

that it was going to be a "boiler plate" sermon.

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

The text was uttered evidently with the most studied nonchalance, deliberate, clean cut, and painfully slow. He seemed looking at nothing in particular, but before the sting had had time to soak through the skin, the godly man turned his little black eyes without moving his head sharply in the direction of the Raven Roost hermit and the Socialist agitator from Texas. Everybody looked hard at the man with the bandage around his head, the jaw of the Texan shot out perceptibly as he ran his huge right hand through his mop of thick black hair. It looked like cloudy weather under his lowering brow, and the painted and powdered down-country ladies fidgetted nervously in their cushioned pews.

With great display of righteous certitude and ultra-piety the preacher read from the seventh chapter of St. Matthew, and when he came to the fifteenth verse wherein it is written: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves," he cast more significant glances askance at them, and both Leland and Stanley felt that they were the innocent objects of a preconized, malignant, but discreet attack.

Leland Tannerhill felt a great weight pressing down upon him. The past had

been a deep black void; but here was a minister of the Gospel in a brazen attempt at thwarting the purpose of the Scriptures, twisting the words of the Savior to fit his studied ends and for the evident reason that two men were present in the House of God who differed from his masters on subjects of economic policy. It looked like a great sin to him, and with his mind's eye, knowing that he had always lived a clean honest life, he looked into the future and beheld for him but a vast desolation. He turned silently and sadly to his companion who was too absorbed in what was being said to notice him.

“Ye shall know them by their fruits,” again came the sneer. This time there could positively be no mistake. He meant them, that was certain. He told the spell-bound congregation to look about them for the fruits of the evil tree. On the marvelous prosperity of the country he expatiated with great elaboration. He called their attention to our wonderful commercial development, and our elastic financial system, and the victorious strides we were making with our glorious army and navy in subjugating and converting the naked and unarmed natives of isolated islands in the distant seas.

He referred to the Mexican revolution, then in progress, as an example of the ingratitude and irresponsibility of the masses

when given too much liberty. He blamed the Mexican government for its too liberal policy and for not making with the sword a more positive demonstration of power and authority over its unworthy subjects!

After making it perfectly clear that the United States could lick anything this side of Hell, he soared oratorically among the asteroids to eulogize our divinely appointed captains of industry. They were the real laboring class, he told them! Without these bejeweled libertines to sit, cushioned and pampered at the top, "the lazy vagabonds who go from place to place stirring up class hatred and preaching revolution would all starve to death!—an end they richly deserved," he fumed.

Then he came right out and said openly just what he meant. "Last night," he resumed heroically, "the germ of the 'red pestilence' of Socialism was inoculated into our peaceful community. It was transmitted from its dark cave by one of its hobo army of disgruntled agitators who go about sowing the tares of discontent between capital and labor."

By this time Leland was thoroughly aroused, and it was with difficulty that his friend restrained him. But the godly gentleman of the cloth valiantly persevered in his exhaustive *re-Aberrantation* of all that had been said and printed in Ashworth earlier in the day.

A fast and deflagrate talker, was the Right Rev. Yancel Lea. O, and he was going good now! "Capital and Labor are brothers," he announced, positively. "Their interests are identical!" he declared emphatically, his pig-squeal voice keyed away up.

" 'Cordin ter thet I must be a twin ter Het Shepherd's sawmill, and you're no less related ter thet air newfangled milk skimmer you told about,'" whispered Leland to his companion. But Stanley Lark heeded him not. This was no new thing to him, but, nevertheless, it was a rare sermon and he could afford to lose none of its fine significance. But when the ecclesiastic follower-in-His-steps tiptoed airily to the apex of his mushy verbiage and away from all semblance to things Godly, the Westerner yawned audibly, shook his head with disgust and reached for his Stetson.

With the dedalian dexterity of a mephistophelian prestidigitator compounded with the genuflection of an obeisant fawn, the Right Rev. Lea coolly aligned God with Wall Street's gang of blacklegs. That was the limit for Leland. He could stand it no longer. He had calmly listened while both he and his new-found friend, together with Socialism and all the Socialists, were being unmercifully and unrighteously grilled, outraged and slandered; but when in abuse of his exalted station he culminated in the

glorification of the bloody Shylocks of Mammon, placing them on a par with the Creator, the soul of him revolted. Even *he* could turn at last—Leland Tannerhill—the man who had never struck a blow and on whose tongue no spiteful word had ever trespassed. The crisis came when, in the midst of a deignous incantation the respected minister of the Gospel declared the Morgans, Rockefellers, Leopolds, Gugen-himes, *et al*, the Chosen Few and special appointees of God Almighty. The Father so loved his children, who were too corrupt and sinful to be trusted, that he had seen fit to intrust the property interests of the country to a few wise men! These, he informed his hearers, were to be the well-nourished custodians of the nation's wealth; sponsors for the government; shapers of the social destiny, and political representatives of the disinherited working classes!

Leland waited for no more. Jerking his Comrade to his feet unceremoniously, he halted long enough to free his volatile mind and to feast his eyes one last time on the scene, ere they bolted from the profaned sanctuary, never to return.

With farewell speculation, he calmly surveyed the old place of worship once so dear to him. There was the new pipe organ, the new colored window, electric lights on the old chandelier where once burned tallow candles of his mother's own dipping, and

the great high-backed, stuffed chair. All these had come with the rich summerers who had donated them—conditionally with the stipulation that they select and pay the preacher!

Far up above the altar under a crown of thorns looked down the compassionate eyes of the Crucified One of Calvary. Leland beamed upon the benign visage on the canvas with sinking heart. The sorrowful eyes seemed more sorrowful than when his poor sister now sleeping out in the old church-yard had painted and hung it there. The picture was a present from Erma to the little church she loved, on the event of its fiftieth anniversary. How often, O, how often had he sat before it and read this commandment of good will emblazoned in crimson letters there:

“LOVE YE ONE ANOTHER.”

He was reading it once again, this for the last time!

Turning now resolutely to the Cyprian functionary, the Tannerhill hermit, both voice and frame shaking with the righteous indignation of inburning protest, bitterly exclaimed: “I ain’t minded fer to disturb no religious service; but this ’ere gatherin’ ‘s nothin’ but a convention o’ shop keepers and hypocrites. It may be thet God Almighty’s sold out to the trusts, mortgaged Heaven and gone into politics; but it’ll take more’n your tootin’ ter make me believe

it, yer pizen coward. Where honest folks used ter come fer to offer thanksgivin' to the Heavenly Father, you've been polished up and shipped in all wound and sot like an alarm clock, ter go off with yer lyin' tongue, a blasphemmin' God and bargainin' the souls of his children ter the Devil. Out o' God's temple you've made an auction block fer ter supply grist ter whoremongers and thieves. It ain't no longer a House o' God, but a hell-hole o' Satan. I've been comin' here fer ter bless my Maker in my simple way fer more'n forty year, half on't alone. But I've got my belly full. You can take yer gold plated religion and go—to—Hell! I'm agoin' home, and I ain't acomin' back!

“I tell ye, Texas, the church is agin us,” he lamented to his companion as they stalked forth together into the moonlit night.

“The church *is* against us, Comrade, but the people don't know it,” was the melancholy rejoinder.

“It usen't to be so, years ago as I remember; but it seems like everything purty much is altered now, and the rich 'pears ter be the whole show.” Stopping suddenly as if a new idea had occurred to him, he laid a still trembling hand on his friend's arm and meditated half inquiringly aloud: “I wonder how thet air sanctimonious skunk got wind o' last night's doin's? He

never goes to Ashworth on a Sunday mornin', and they hain't been a team pass or some on us would a seen it."

"Phone," was the other's laconic reply. "Every preacher now days has a telephone. It's a part of the paraphernalia of their capitalistic churchianity. Somebody interested in perpetuating the existing social order called him up and put him next. There'll be more to it, or I'm a stray maverick in a salten sink."

As they stepped from the maple orchard at the corner of the house and rounded the old wellcurb, Leland paused, removed his hat and turned a last look in the direction of the scene just left behind. Then he heaved a long, deep sigh! "Good-bye," he said at length, "good-bye!"

Stanley went straight to the well, drew up a spilling bucket of ice-cold water a hundred feet from under ground for the waterpail on the sinkboard, while Leland was lighting the kitchen lamp.

Their eyes fell upon it both at the same time. There it lay, face up on the kitchen table—The *Aberrant!*! How did it get there, and why? It was Sunday, and no mail was ever delivered on the Sabbath. Furthermore, the thing was a weekly, issued on Thursday. But this was an "EXTRA!" dated Sunday—that very day!

This it was, more than the non-arrival of his old chum from Alaska that had done



"You may take your gold-plated religion and go—to—Hell!
I'm a'goin' home and I ain't a'comin' back!"

it. It was all clear to him now. No longer was he at variance with the policy of Jason Sands—the fighter. Jason was right; it *was* a living fight and a fight to live. There *were* opposing forces in Society. The lines were clearly drawn and one had to choose. It was an unwelcome awakening, but it was an awakening that had to come. The saddest part of it was in that it had come too late.

Opening the little black Bible after the *Aberrant* had been read through by both of them, he came, strangely enough, upon these words: "*He who is not for me is against me.*"

From that day on the decline of him had been rapid and sure.

Leland Tannerhall was no fighter. On the contrary, his was a love nature. He saw, or tried to see, only the good in men. He preferred to think well of those who reviled him. But he had stood up under too great a burden—all too long.

That night Stanley Lark was awakened by the ravings of a madman. Before retiring, he had played and sung to him, and now the music was in his ears again, and he thought it was his dead sister Erma. "Sing me 'THE HOME OF THE SOUL,' Twink." (Twinkle, a pet name he used to call her by when they played and sang together before the organ came.) "Play it soft-like so's not ter drown the singin',"

he called from the bedroom, and Stanley understood.

First it was the singing, then it was over to Jason's; down in the meadow; at the old watering-trough, or playing hide-and-seek as on rainy days they had played in the haymows and up on the great beams in the old barn. It was surprising with what rapidity his mind would wander, as he lived over the whole vista of their vanished childhood, in the springtime of a barren life, romping among the flowers and the new-mown hay, or coasting on their double-runner under the moonlight on the glare crust in winter. There would be days and nights of it. Then he would return to himself as sane and as sound—apparently—as ever. But Stanley could see that he was going, and he regretted that he could not stay with him all the way through. But there was Ignorance—vast and monumental Ignorance—to combat, in the battle of Reason against Wrong, and he had to be up and doing.

With the first re-appearance of delirium, Stanley threw the harness on to Black Raven and struck for a doctor. He urged that splendid animal over the road to Ashworth as no man had ever driven him before. The handsome beast seemed to know, and entered into the spirit of the quest with a speed to shame the urging. Driving straight to the Holiness Tavern, he depu-

tized Rec Cotton and together they went the rounds for help; but not a doctor in the village would promise, right out, to go! They drew back from the sweet-mannered Socialist, wide-eyed, and in evident terror! *The pulpit and the press had done their work!*

But Rec Cotton would go, and he would continue to go twice a week, and Jennie Drew would go along and help as best she could. In this way the stock would be cared for and the poor man made comfortable, and when the end should come there would be willing hands to minister to his last needs.

* * * * *

It was the 24th of December, the night before Christmas. The three day's blizzard that had blocked all traffic and frozen the whole rural community indoors was subsiding, though the cold was still intense. The palsied hand was silent, now, and the soft blue eyes that once beamed warmly with honesty and full of kindness were deep-sunken in dark sockets under the white forehead.

In the window, the smoky little lamp had burned out, and the tracks of rodents were more numerous in the thinly sifted snow on the bedroom floor.

Slowly and painfully a ghost-like form raised upright and sat, like one risen from the dead, among the patchwork quilts.

Then the form arose and tottered across the snow-carpeted room to the window, scraped a peek-hole through the frost with a thick thumb-nail and peered out across the white mantled fields; but there was no light in the little church over on the bleak hillside, nor was there a sign of life in all the world as far as he could see. Over him came creeping a terrible loneliness—a loneliness that was akin to the grave.

With one hand against the wall for support, the other hanging heavily at his side, he made his way to the kitchen, refilled and lighted the little lamp, looked at the clock and into his Levitt's almanac and re-entered the bedroom. Yes, it *was* Christmas Eve. Soon the little meeting-house would be aglow with many candles, and out through the frosty night would peal forth the Christmas carols, ringing out the glad tidings in joyous memory of Him who died for men. But *he* would not be there! He had never been absent from the annual Christmas festival in all his life. This was his first miss. Alas, it was destined not to be the only one!

Once more he hobbled to the window, all unmindful of the cold and of the snow upon which his bare feet fell without causing him any pain. They were frozen solid to the ankles and thumped upon the worn floor boards like muffled stones. In his legs below the knees there was no feeling,

and over him was slowly falling a blissful drowsiness, mingled with the numb warmth which comes surely with the freezing of the blood.

The bells were ringing now, and through the narrow windows of the little house of worship that long he had loved so well streamed the many-colored glow of the festive illuminations. He listened for the sleigh-bells as he had listened for them so often, and watched wistfully down the drifted road for the lanterns to flit past, as he had seen them flitting past when Christmas bells were happy harbingers of love and joy to him. But the sleigh-bells never came. The lanterns never passed. But the drowsiness persisted, in spite of the unmistakable evidence that he had slept a long time.

His mind was clearer now, and he looked at his white left hand and at his whiter lifeless feet, and he knew that he was freezing!

Back to its place in the window he carried and carefully sat the smoky little lamp, looked out a last time at the lights on the hillside, and with trembling voice feebly soliloquized: "It may be that the Lamb o' God is allus with them that worship him. But he ain't over there, neither be I. But Erm, you be over there! O Erm, darlin' Erm! And I'll be there soon, too, dear

little Twinkle, for I guess my waitin' is 'bout over and my time has come."

Turning in the dim, uncertain light until he faced her picture over the organ, long he gazed upon it with unspeakable veneration and longing. Next he opened the old plush-covered album and turning to the double picture of his sister and her lover, he invoked the blessing of God on them both and climbed back into bed, just as Rec Cotton and Jennie Drew pushed open the oaken doom and burst into the cold kitchen. They had been snowed in the night before at Little Squam Bridge, and had just gotten through.

Like Trojans they worked over their demented frost-bitten Comrade, and finally with the old house heated from the four fireplaces, the frost drawn and his feet and left hand treated with as much knowledge and care as they possessed and could give, they took turns on watch, sitting up with him until daylight, when they left for fresh supplies over a trackless road eight miles back to Ashworth.

Leland Tannerhill had suffered pain before; but with the feeling slowly working back into the thawed feet and hand, nothing like description of the excruciating agony of this was mortally possible. Swollen to thrice their normal size, and with the thawed blood scalding like hot water,

his feet felt like they were burning in boots run full of molten lead, and his hand might well have been in a red-hot vise.

Why could not the morbid hallucinations return! How much could flesh and blood endure? If only the snow had been deeper! Why could they not have left him yet a little longer?

“Them pins ain’t never goin’ ter come ‘round right, that’s sartin,” he declared positively to himself after his friends had gone. And when at eventide he lay and watched the red sun slip down coldly behind Plymouth Mountain, he knew it was setting, for him, for the last time.

“December the twenty-fifth,” he said aloud, when the last of the red rim had all but disappeared and the long, slate-colored shadows from the nude trees began falling dismally athwart the rime meadow. “Nigh two thousand years ago ter-day you come ter bring peace, and they driv spikes through your feet and hands and gi’n ye gall ter drink; and if ye was ter come ter-day they wouldn’t nail ye ter the cross—they’d print suthin’ agin ye in their lyin’ yaller press, and the p’lice would run ye in,” he avowed bitterly, his gaze fixed on the Hallowed Child in a frame above the mantel. It was another of Erma’s paintings wrought when she was in her early teens. Sitting upright as best he could in

his extremity, he continued, the passion of his rended soul firing him into one last mighty travail. "Ye come to 'em with love and peace in yer heart and they murdered ye." He was on his swollen feet now and looking out over the valley where a certain head-stone stood stark and white amid the whiter snows. He began again, running back over the years and finally breaking out woefully: "Christmas day, nineteen hunder'd and ten! Jist twenty year ago to-day, Erm, since we laid you ter rest yender, and now I'm comin' too!"

Turning again to the picture of Jesus Christ, he fell on his swollen knees before it and cried out in a wild, unnatural voice where the waning sunset fell in golden flood upon the floor: "Lord, Lord! Hear me jist this once. I know it's an awful sin, and I guess you'll have hard work ter fergive me fer what I'm goin' ter do; but I'm goin' ter do it if ye send me ter Hell, fer I've stood it as long as I can and the wust can't be harder'n this 'ere I'm sufferin'. Mebbe I hain't been good ernough fer ter enter in where you be, and if I hain't then I won't complain; but I want to go where Erm is, fer I've come ter realize that most probably Jase is gone too, and if that's so, then they be together, where ever they may be. I ain't afeared of the Judg-
ment, fer I've done the best I knowed. I ask it now fer Jesus' sake. Amen."

With this the last of the Tannerhills arose, lighted the smoky little lamp in the window, hobbled laboriously to the old clock in the kitchen, opened the door in the bottom and drew forth the rawhide thong!

CHAPTER XI.

THE SURRENDER OF THE FROST KING.

Aflame, how coldly, through the artic night,
Her *merry dancers* flirting with Jack Frost,
Queen Borealis flashes up her light—
A silent Lorealei to farer lost
Amid the snows! And 'decked with crystal gem
Like fairy sovereign on her Polar Throne,
Sans royal court or royal diadem.
But 'neath the North Star's purple all alone,
The fallen farer cries, and cries in vain!
Wake, Genius! Ho! far through the brumal chill
Thy brother calls! Bid him arise again—
A triumph to thy re-awakened will.

Six men, patient but expectant, peered through the mammoth glass cylinder, but no man spoke. The cylinder was ten feet in length by five feet in diameter, to which was attached four small hose-like tubes. The six men were Quimby Sands, Jason Sands, Dr. Spanto, Jack Philips and two of the *Agitator's* chief Physic Scientists. Inside the glass cylinder lay a projectile-shaped block of ice, inside of which again was frozen as clear as moss-agate, the fur-clad body of a man. The man frozen inside the block of ice lying inside the glass cylinder was the unfortunate prospector, Ben Page.

It was while on his way to No. 5 Carry with the packages for Leland Tannerhill,

that Ben had run afoul of wolves—the remnant of the same pack that had escorted Jason Sands to his cliff bed only a few nights before.

No. 5 Carry was a new government post on the Drinkwater River, where the mail sledges crossed the divide between Nome and Gold City, a mere twenty miles from the Broken Bone. The wolves were unusually bad, having suffered two crushing defeats without tasting the sweet flesh of man, and Ben was obliged to take to the higher ground above the timber line to evade them. Here he encountered a fierce blizzard in which he lost his way and froze to death in the blinding snow. An Indian dog musher from the Carry, out for rabbits, found and brought in his pack, sent the packages on their way through the pass, and made a diligent but fruitless search for the owner. Four years later a party of Canadian government surveyors came upon the body, frozen fast in a glacier, ten thousand feet below the scene of its death, whither an avalanche had swept it.

It was the first thing the *Comet* with her all-piercing eye had discovered—these Canadian government surveyors in the act of melting out that frozen body from the glacier by means of heaping dry wood on a fire made against the river of ice.

With a thin ray of charged light, the *Comet* sawed out the block of ice containing the body, hoisted it aboard, and in twenty minutes it was resting inside the glass experimental cylinder on the *Agitator*.

With the correct adjustment of temperature, tune, air and light from the four tubes and the exterior, the glass cylinder suspended inside its cushioned chamber, the body was to be left in its frozen state until they should return to St. Louis, or such time as their entire attention could be given to its resurrection. For it were a ticklish undertaking, this experimenting with the dead, and there must be no haste and no mistake. The young wizard had always wanted to try it, and now here was the supreme test of man's mastery over the elements: to bring back a life from the infallible decree of the Frost King.

And why not?

The good priest at the Carry had come out to say the last rites, the grave had been dug, and all was in readiness for the everlasting burial of one whom Orthodoxy proclaimed was hopelessly a dead man.

“Not so fast,” challenged the new Science. “Here we have a healthy, perfect animal mechanism, rendered temporarily inoperative through too close contact with the peculiar chemistry of cold.

Every cell in this man's body retains its every faculty. There is not a broken wheel or a clogged gear in the entire human machine. Nothing has taken place within it, nor without it, but a suspension of animation as a result of the perfectly natural crystallization, under unnatural environmental conditions, of the electro-chemical circulation which supplies that warmth necessary to its functional activity. This is what you with your conventional—criminal ignorance—are pleased to term death. For thousand of years you have been proclaiming death to all mankind, at the same time damning souls of the dead to Hell, or praying them to Heaven, according to certain specifications and price. There is nothing dead in the Universe." Thus spake the inventor of the new fire crafts, while the befurrowed and bewiskered miners, awe-stricken, stared at him standing in his white linen uniform just where a cornucopia of soft light from the *Comet* hedged his little party about.

The good priest wrathfully objected to the removal of the body, claiming that it were desecration of God's holy will to thus defile these mortal bones from which the soul was departed now four long years. "It is not given to us of inferior dust to raise the dead in this generation," he forbade, "and you shall not profane the law

by practicing your modern hocus-pocus on the silent remains of this beloved child of God."

Having in advance received his fee in generous measure from the yellow dust of the miners and surveyors, he demanded his priestly prerogative of purgatorial soul-herd, and proceeded to administer the last rites forthwith and unopposed. Then a miner's meeting hurriedly convened, the decision of which was to the effect that the body should go with Jason Sands. Whereupon, and without further ado the tackle was fastened in the ice block, the body and crew hauled aboard and the power trimmed for speed.

As the *Agitator* headed for the North Pole, Jason told a story of a live frog blasted out of a block of granite. The strange phenomenon appeared strikingly analogous to his son's remarkable theory concerning bodies rendered rigid and inactive as a result of sudden freezing.

"I was working in a quarry at Concord, N. H., back in the '80s, when the thing happened," he began. "Sammie Brodie was holding drill for me, for we took turn and turn about striking. He called my attention to it as the rock parted, or I surely never would have believed it other than some of his Irish trickery. In the slab split off there was a small hollow space the size and shape of half an egg, and as smooth as a wolf's

fang. In the other side crouched a white frog, all hunched up and blinking in the sunlight. Sam crossed himself, got off something about 'the holy mither uv Moses' and lit out for the lift."

"Perfectly legitimate evidence of the theory of conditional, geological mutation," interrupted his son. "It is proof positive that this planet was not made as it now is, but that there have developed decided changes in its structural architecture. Otherwise the granite might have been in the frog instead of the frog in the granite. Surely the earth was not made from frogs," he asserted buoyantly.

"Violates the 'six days shalt thou labor' injunction," vouchsafed Jack Philips tentatively.

"Only in so far as intellectual comprehension extends," the other qualified. Then by way of explanation: "Science possesses knowledge, and all knowledge is, always has been, and always will be in contempt of judgment. To the scientist, every day in the week is but another day. To the 'believers,' there is what is said to be a 'Holy Sabbath.' Formerly, and before the advent of the task-master, men labored when they pleased, rested when they pleased and played when they pleased. The Sabbath Day, so-called, is the invention of man and followed the invention of clothing—as a natural sequence. It was a health measure. Something had to

be done to make the hitherto naked tribes change their clothes, which they were prone to wear night and day alike once they had gotten them firmly fixed upon themselves. Of course the masters had them to sell, that's why the slaves had to have them to wear. It was the beginning of Capitalism. It came along with religion. At that time there was no need of clothing, for there was room enough on the earth within the equatorial zone for all mankind—which would still be true were it not for the sad fact that the race had been dehumanized and dispossessed.

“When the masters saw that their slaves could not be induced to disrobe at night, they invented the ‘Day of Rest.’ As things were, the slaves would not change clothes for divers reasons: First, herded together as they were, there was no surety of one getting his same outfit in the morning; secondly, they had not enough ambition left after a day’s drudgery on the soil, and for the chief reason that they were covered with sores caused by the unaccustomed contact of the coarse clothing and the driver’s lash.

“Now about that time it was ordained that not only should the Holy Sabbath be a day of rest and worship, but also it must be a day of cleanliness and clothes changing! So the slaves had to have another suit of clothes—two suits, if you please! Of course this put them further in debt to their masters, but they didn’t catch on. It was a

new canon of sanitation, made mandatory, any violation of which was punishable with death. Thus Society got to take a bath, the very thing it most needed."

From this the discussion led off through all the vast multitude of theories and mythologies, from before Adam to star dust, finally winding up where it began, with the frozen man and the hundred-thousand-year-old frog.

It was all in the books, he told them. But the experiment he was about to try was not in the books, though it was destined to be. If a frog can be hibernated in his bed of mud that had crystallized into a solid granite mountain and kept alive a hundred thousand years from such Eocene epoch, and if a frozen fish could be thawed out and returned to its former state of health and activity after having been frozen all winter in an iceberg, why in the name of human reason should it seem illogical to hope for a chance for Ben Page?

*While standing with tolerant acquiescence by the open grave they had dug for the frozen miner, the thought struck him: *why not manufacture human food from earth?* There it was, just earth, mixed through with charcoal from their fires. Trees, plants, vegetables—even the grasses knew enough to make their food supply from earth, why not man? Man was of chemical construction the same as the plant life. So was the earth.

Here was the nucleus for a new invention—the greatest of all those yet brought out. It would revolutionize the world of industry. It would be a sixty per cent. saver in human labor.

Making human food from earth! He ran over the sentence in his mind, then slipped a hand inside his linen coat; and when the *Comet* left with Ben Page in the ice block, she also had on board a hundred pounds of the clean earth melted out of the frozen river bank.

At the North Pole they learned that no man had ever been there before. Also they discovered the age-long secret of the Aurora Borealis. No man could have journeyed to the “big nail” before, because it must have been absolutely inaccessible to man with any other means of transportation less adequate than either the *Agitator* or the *Comet*.

Standing like a paper cone, miles in circumference and miles in height directly over the center of the magnetic axis, was a mountainous peak of perpetual ice and snow. Of course, no sun ever reached the base of this tower of frost, consequently there was falling upon it a never-ending storm of snow. Here was a point, where, save for the Aurora Borealis, Night, never-ending, somber Night, held her silent, undisputed sway.

Into and through and beyond the pole burned the great fire-ship, then back again

and into the ice-packed Arctic Ocean. There was nothing mysterious—not even interesting—in the trip through the Polar Cone, more than the noise of cracking, bursting and falling ice, and the wonderful color effects produced by the power ray in contact with the ice and snow as it was fused into gas and consumed. That daylight could never reach the region was no enigma to one understanding the correlative positions of the earth and sun in their respective life cycles, each around the other.

The said-to-be magnetic attraction as demonstrated in the “magnetic” needle, was no other force than that of cold and heat. Also it was this same force of temperature which accounted for the attraction of gravitation that kept the earth suspended in space. Heat, the expellant force, pushing the heavy end of the needle farthest away, with the expellation of the heat-expanded ether, while Cold, the attractive force, gathering the heat-dried vapors to its central and coldest point, this was the secret of “magnetic” attraction, gravitation and solar cycle phenomena. There was neither magnetism nor magnetic force situated at the poles. Of course, owing to its comparative close proximity to the earth, none of the heat-condensing rays from the focal center of the solar body were possible of effectively generating warmth at either of the Polar extremities. But there were

sources of light other than the sun in this icen wonder world. Volcanoes of all sizes and in all stages of eruption and recrudescence spasmodically burst forth from the very depths of the frozen ocean, almost momentarily, and as spasmodically subsided and disappeared. *The Pillar* was sent up and of what it saw there could be no mistake. Mountains, red hot, pushed up through ice a hundred feet thick, burst, snurted their white-hot vomit miles into the frost-laden ether amid sounds unthinkable, and with indescribable auroral beauty.

Volcanoes were not actually the Aurora Borealis; but they contributed a power of parhelian magnificence thereto, forming what might be said, somewhat paradoxically, to be a sort of extraneous adjunct to the major phenomena. With a huge cone of ever-falling snow crystals sifting over the frozen end of earth for a radius of a hundred miles, hanging far over all like a cloud of diamond dust shot through with the far distant rays of the cold red sun, this was the Aurora Borealis. But this was not all. What of the volcanoes with their clouds of earth ashes rosetting, zenith-poised, in a rainbow-like semi-circle intermingled, multi-hued and gorgeous, with the crystalline veil of brumal midnight splendor! With the red rays of the unseen sun from the other side of the globe miraging his crimson-purple coronet against this

gauzy fluff of ashes and frost, and with the constantly moving vapors wafting these hanging gardens of hoar lace fitfully like breakers on an ocean swell, it seemed that all the rainbows from eons pristine to yawning futurity were regimented into one vast victorious amalgamation of celestial effulgence.

As the *Agitator* emerged from her self-melted tunnel in the ice cone, the *Comet* came forth, loaded and primed with her night cameras for motion pictures of the beautiful Northern Lights. It was just in time to catch a new eruption right in their wake and less than a hundred fathoms distant. This was followed by another and another, until, like an Indian headdress, a circle of active volcanoes completely encircling the boreal center, spurted up smoke, ashes and glowing lava like a myriad-tongued serpent hissing his red-mouthed warning at the dancing arch of blue-mantled glory.

As the eruptions continued and the tongues of vivid flame licked up the black night, belching, spitting and gushing lava, cinders, smoke and fire against the canopy of indescribable coloring that reached from horizon to horizon, nothing like an adequate description of it, nor of the sensation it effected on the mind, is even mildly possible. There were all the known colors, and colors unknown. And such blending of

hues! With the volcanic heat was generated a fierce wind. This wind had the effect of moving, drifting and mingling smoke, ashes, snow and the ever-crystallizing vapors into millions of unimaginable shapes, positions and density, until the eyes tired and the senses staggered under strain of all its wondrous grandeur. There was no moment when all the colors were not partially visible; but they were ever-variating, deepening, fading and changing places, as if the whole vast expanse of astral infinity were peopled with countless throngs of toe-dancing fairies, garbed in velvety butterfly chromatics of changeable flowing silk. Let one imagine all this bristling through with countless billions of dazzling prisms of streaming, trembling light! Let one imagine all this, then double his imagination, multiply it by a million, and he will get but a faint idea of an Aurora Borealis as seen from the magnetic axis under the North Star.

But there were other fish to fry.

It was in December, 1914.

They had been around the world; they had opened the sealed vault of the North Pole; they had Ben Page on board, frozen up in ice, and they were bound for St. Louis, the journey's end.

They knew that the Mexican Revolution had failed. True, the marionette, Diaz, had been operated to resign by his Wall Street

manipulators, and allowed to escape out of the country he had for thirty years drenched in innocent blood. And he had been allowed to take with him the golden millions crystallized from the heart pained blood of his gasping slaves. But Capitalism had remained. Which went to show that the Socialist Revolution as projected by the heroic handful of unconquerable martyrs had been anticipated and had failed. It had failed, not because it lacked either in numbers or capital, arms, or righteousness of cause. It had failed for the good and sufficient reason that it was aimed at the Beast and was led by such god-men as Ricardo Flores Magon, L. Gutierrez de Lara, Liberado Rivera, Antonio I. Villarreal and their American sympathizers—all revolutionary Socialists. Added to which reasons was the fact that the political grafters of the Great United States of America, true to their traditions, transported her armed myrmidons to the land of sunshine and tears to thwart them, and to aid their gambler-masters in perpetuating tyranny.

Counter to the real revolution, they had fostered, aided and abetted a false revolution to deceive the patriots and thwart the purpose of the real movement of emancipation. This fake revolution was led by traitors to the common people. These leaders were in favor at Wall Street and

Mexico City, and so Wall Street permitted, temporarily, the false revolution which simply gave the people a change of masters, to succeed.

And then began the fiendish crime of secretly and publicly murdering the real social revolutionists by the new fake Mexican government. Wherever found on Mexican soil, these true patriots were lynched and strung up, shot to death or otherwise made away with, and as an accessory to this inhuman practice of murdering political opponents as was also practiced by the demon, Diaz, the great United States lent her police and military power. No man was free to walk the streets, nor was he safe in his own home. Upon any trumped-up charge, men were seized and torn from their loved ones, thrown into prison without process of law, held indefinitely without trial to be turned over to the froth-fanged human hyenas who awaited them just across the Mexican frontier.

This was the method of Russia. Also it was the method of Spain and the rest of the barbaric Autocracies. Thus it was that thousands of martyrs were brutally murdered and their work for humanity retarded, discredited or destroyed.

At Nome they learned that there was trouble brewing by these same political fakers, who, at the behest of their economic masters, had succeeded in fermenting more

trouble in Mexico that the country might safely be annexed to the United States—a criminal capitalistic conspiracy just recently consummated. Also they learned at Nome, that the great capitalistic United States-by-the-grace-of-its-billion-dollar owners, was at very serious loggerheads with rapidly organizing labor. Putting himself in communication with the Red Cadets by means of the *Agitator's* wireless system, Quimby Sands learned that the United States was in a terrible turmoil of retrogressive political confusion. Engaged in this gentle pastime of vote-catching voodooism, were the "Gold Standard" Democrats, the "Cross of Silver" Democrats, the "dry" Democrats, the "wet" Democrats and the "Africo-Jeffersonian" Democrats. Then there came the Republicans: The "Dinnerpail Foolers," The "Stand-patters," the "Insurgents" and the "High tariffers," and the "God Knows me toos"—all Republicans and all "wets."

Opposing these came the good but misguided Prohibitionists, the ancient and moss-covered Populists, the "Independents," the fake "Labor Unionist" Party, and what was said to be the "Suffragettes"—whatever that may mean. One thing it did not mean, however, it did not mean the great, grand American Woman's Suffrage Movement, composed of the very virtue of motherhood and sisterhood of the useful

home-loving women of the land. For these women were doing an heroic and splendid work. Awakened and aroused at last, they were proving that they could organize, finance and conduct political movements without either the aid of a besodden masculinity or the pampered mistress of a labor-hating Belmont.

Following all of which persisted the Single-taxers, with their slogan of "Back-to-the-Land" (naked and empty-handed!).

It was a sorrowful jumble of conflicting economic interests, finding expression on the political field. Each particular group acting individually and purely in self-interest, or what it imagined was self-interest, it was a woeful spectacle of muddle-brained fanatacism annually paraded in the face of a more muddle-brained Society as a civilized example of "personal political liberty!" Of course, the chief "pickin's" occurred only once in four years; but the results were far-reaching, never-ending, and constantly growing worse.

*At Victoria, Seattle, Portland and San Francisco they were furnished with more information concerning existing conditions, and that the country was rapidly approaching a mighty crisis there could be no gainsaying.

Within this seething caldron of contemporaneous cross-purposes, where battled blindly the misled factions of a society gone

mad, germinated the inevitable. Other countries had passed through it, but the United States—the Great United States—had been the last. Another champion had entered the political arena. It was the mighty International Socialist Party. At last it had come and was making itself felt and heard. The Red Cadets it was that had hastened the day. As a result of their classified literature crusade came the Industrial Co-operative Democrats.

Prior to this there were many Socialistic parties, and many factions of each of these. But the Great Cause—the Great Life Philosophy—the one great World Socialist Movement had come and remained, firmly rooted in the rapidly developing and inevitably decadent capitalist system.

There had been many Socialistic parties but only one Socialist movement. Many interpretations had been proclaimed, but there was but one Socialist philosophy. It had been the same through all history—an idea accepted but misunderstood.

For a long time these several Socialistic parties had wastefully fought each other, and all the hundreds of factions had fought each other, while the real enemy—Capitalism—looked on and grinned. This was because Socialism was of the working class which had never been taught anything but toil—toil, and falsehood, and competition and optimistic political acquiescence. With

the awakening of the outraged conscience had followed spasmodic rebellious resistance to everything savoring of individual usurpation, generating more momentum with each explosion until anger and jealousy were aroused, often winding up their local meetings in a chaos of misunderstanding, intolerant personal abuse, and reactionary internal divisions. Meanwhile, on marched the enemy, the one enemy, the only possible enemy—Capitalism.

Imagine ten million Socialists, all possessing the franchise, all understanding the correct interpretation of the Socialist philosophy, and for twelve years only casting approximately, at the presidential elections, a measly 500,000 votes! And this because of the sad fact that a few soldiers in this vast army of peace, going out to conquer the world with the armament of love, secretly carried the poisoned poinard of Jealousy for the heart of some possibly over-zealous but none the less sincere comrade. But all this was changed now. With the fierce and bloody war of Mexican annexation had come the solidarity of union and non-union labor. Quimby Sands had written a pamphlet courageously telling them to their faces of their faults, and they profited by the frank castigation. It was a mirror, so to speak, held up before them and they looked into it boldly; for there were neither cowards nor traitors among

these early social rebels, save for a high-handed element which, if it could not rule by fair means, was bound to ruin by foul. These were the self-assertive egotists who had caused the temporary disruptions, which had resulted in driving the majority of the active workers away from the meetings and in many cases out of the party, until the Socialist Party of that period had become too small and hide-bound for the Socialist movement.

It was this sort of thing that had so long held down Socialist progress in the United States. The most trustified and therefore the fiercest reign of capitalistic tyranny of any nation on earth, it very logically follows that it should have been the first government to fall under the Socialist flag. Therefore, it was the boasted optimism of numberless exponents of the new political economy, that such was bound to be the case.

Alas for the optimism of the cock-sure dogmatist!

Logic was one thing, but the practical application of a correct social philosophy under adverse circumstances was quite another. It was not at all hard to see that, with the superior equipment in modern machinery of wealth production, America was leading the world in the production of the necessities of life. Nor was it hard to see that with the absolute monopolization of

all this machinery of wealth production together with all the means of shipment, travel, communication and raw supply, including the very land itself, the wealth of the nation was rapidly concentrating in the hands of few, and fewer, until, it would seem, with the complete dispossession of the workers, a crisis must be reached when the people would have to turn to Socialism or perish of starvation. Also, and as the cock-sure dogmatist would proclaim, it would seem no more that good horse reasoning to assume that workers so dispossessed, owned, body and soul and surely starving, would seize upon Socialism as a drowning man catches a straw. *But they had reckoned without their host!*

They had not considered the fact that Capitalism, at that time, reigned throughout the world. They had omitted giving any attention to the Dick Military Law. They forgot that the Supreme Court and Federal Judiciary was the law of the land. That the Catholic church maintained a standing army of 3,000,000 men, armed to the teeth and that every Catholic church was an armory and an arsenal, boded no menace as far as these "everything-is-all-right" comrades could see. That Capitalism was an international organization of money changers whose interests were identical, and who would collaborate at last to crush their rebellious slaves, were material

only for the jokesmiths. Oh, they were experts on the political chessboard, were these big, love-hearted comrades; but they forgot that the ballot was an instrument only lent the workers for the purpose of making their slavery appear like liberty, and for the additional purpose of voting their masters into power. That it could be withdrawn or suspended at any time through a proclamation of martial law had never occurred to them. Adding still to their amiss judgment (unmerciful to say though it may seem) was their jocular indifference concerning the international matrimony market for the traffic in royal titles.

The early Socialist-optimist could sense no physical opposition to Socialism in the pornegamic unions of American heiresses with the leperous pimps of monarch-ridden Europe. But to the latter school the inter-marrying of domestic and foreign parasites carried with it a most menacing significance. True, the other countries had fallen into the Socialist lap; but only after the workers had organized themselves into one vast and complete union, and then only at the last minute. That they had organized in time to abort the diabolical plots of the rulers to wholesale them to death by the soldiery, was not the fault of the masters. Capital was capital, and they were the capitalists. Who could expect them to want their voluptuous

sons and daughters to be reckoned citizens under the Co-operative Commonwealth? Why! They might have to go to work! To think of it!—*Work!* They give up power and idleness for *Work?*—*Never!*

Cruel as it may seem, yet it would not be fair to omit just one more wrong point in the methods of reasoning indulged in by these good comrades of the chaotic and obsolete past. They gave the orthodox voter of the working classes credit for having intelligence! They appealed to their heads instead of to their stomachs. Their stomachs were intelligent, knowing and distinguishing the gnawing pangs of hunger from the siren songs of the “prosperity” vaudeville artists; but the brain of an American voting sovereign of that time was so thoroughly imbued with patriotic fervor that he couldn’t tell the difference between a judge-made labor injunction and a side of trust-made beef.

But with the coming of the Red Cadets came classified literature; with classified literature came Industrial Unionism—the unionism that unified—the Industrial Co-operative Democrats. With the perfection of this mighty *one union*, into which was swept every individual, male and female who worked for wages in the nation, followed the consolidation of all liberal and reform doctrinarians, as they came into the great International Socialist Party,

one by one, leaving behind their petty fidgetings, foolish jealousies and childish fears. In other countries, whose cults, sects, creeds, factions and budding political bodies had been admitted boldly and bodily; but that had been tried with disastrous results here, and so only the individual method of absorption by way of the open door came to prevail, and with better results.

The early struggles of the American Socialist movement had been fraught with many harrying discouragements. There had been as many brands of Socialist preaching as there were theories concerning the hereafter. A Socialist was a Socialist up to the point where it seemed to conflict with some inherited or dyed-in-the-wool belief or superstition, and there his wires crossed. Also, there were many "Socialist" parties and near-parties in the early days, which grew from the Socialist seed and thrived, or sprouted and withered according to their scientific or unscientific fundamentals. The seed of Socialism fell upon many qualities of mental soil. Some barren of reasoning, some stony with ignorance, and some poisonous with the stagnant slime of jealousy and unyielding prejudice.

Among some of the names of the various Socialist parties, and names by which they were slanderously called, were: The S. L.

Ps., the Christian Socialists, the Utopians, "Impossiblists," the "Palliators," the "Compromisers," the Revolutionists, the "Step-at-a-timers," the Colonizers, the Fabians, the "Intellectuals," the Fusionists, the "Proletarians," the "Parlor Socialists," the International Socialist Party, and the "Some-things Socialist." This latter curiosity being attracted because of an abiding hope that Socialism was bound to become suddenly very popular, when it would offer him an excellent shelter from the wet. He wanted all the Socialists wanted and more. He wanted Socialism for what there was in it; but he wanted Capitalism also, for the reason that he feared Socialism would give him an honest job of work and cut off his little private graft.

Surely they were a generous array of rebellious comrades. Each possessed of many erroneous and conflicting abstract opinions, but all agreed upon one point, *the one point*—the great vital point: the fundamental declaration that, "whereas, Labor creates all wealth, Labor shall possess the full value of its created product."

And so, up out of all the tumultuous, blind, but ever-evolving yeast of history, emerged over the industrial horizon the sun haloed head of the modern progress-god—Organized, Educated, Co-operative Labor.

But it was tardy in the coming. The Giant had slept too long! Wall Street with its Pinkertons in the labor councils and its marionettes in Washington, had the situation in hand—or thought it had. But with the annexation of Mexico had come a sharp, short but terrible war with Japan in which the United States had suffered an unmerciful but richly deserved thrashing, and was left humiliated, bankrupt and without a navy.

America had fermented it primarily for commercial exploitation; but it served two other purposes as well. It helped to distract the attention of its voting sovereigns from the capitalistic misrule of the masters and from Socialist activity at home.

The masters believed more in slogans, red fire, flags and rum, than they did in progress. They had an old saw to the effect that, "one should never swap horses while crossing a stream." This had been paraded before the ox-eyed herd for fifty years, and was always resurrected just prior to each Presidential election, for the effect it was supposed to have in keeping the dominant party perpetually in power. It was remarkable the way they overworked these slogans, rags, rum and fireworks. But that the "stunt" really worked, was no less remarkable! And these ring-nosed cattle—these mild-mannered voting, "free-born" drifting slaves were said to be "men"!

“Issues,” this was the watchword of the masters, and issues they invented and pulled off with remarkable regularity and precision whenever the green pastures were outfed and the mild-eyed herd were idle and starving. Such a condition was said to be a period of “over-production”! These periodical overstockings of markets with the wealth created by the mild-eyed heard were always sources of great mystery to the voting cattle. Whenever their hands were idle and their stomachs empty, it was a marvelous coincidence that the storehouses were always filled to the bursting point; and the phenomenon continued an unsolved enigma, that the working citizenry of a nation should starve amid rotting abundance for the crime of having with their own hands created too much wealth!

“Hard times,” would go up the blatant plaint from the sand dunes of the Herd, and straightway out on the Stage of “Isse” would troop the whole puppet show, including President, Senators, Chief, “Justices” and all the rest of the humbugs and chief humbugs, and then the play would begin:

THE POLITICAL MONTE-BANK PLAY:

Act I.

Scene—Execution Mansion.

Enter President Taffy (on a raft). Picks up queer-shaped skull labeled "LABOR," shakes his head sadly (and incidentally his 300-pound paunch) and drawls, sleepily: "Poor Yorick! He knew me (hic) well!"

(Voice from audience:)

"I say, Bill, when there's a drouth and feed's short in the pasture, what's a poor mule to do?"

(Thunder machine, amid great confusion behind the scenes.)

Pres. Taffy: "God knows!"
Exit Pres. Taffy.

Act II.

Scene—Supreme Court.

Enter nine puppets in white wigs and long black gowns.

Door opens and straw octopus enters labeled "STANDARD GREASE."

Chief in-justice Might, arising: "Gentlemen of the Supreme Court, pay heed to my rant. We shall now proceed to bust the trusts" (presses spring on small Jack-in-the-Box cabinet labeled T. R., cover flies off, blank cartridges explode and red fire ignites, as out of the box pops the "Big-Stick," swatting the straw octopus in the bustle, knocking it into the proverbial cocked hat).

Protracted cheers and laughter!

Curtain.

(Audience retires in order, and re-entering pasture, proceeds to grub peacefully away at the tawny stubble praying the while for rain.)

At his reception in San Francisco the young wizard announced two wonderful new discoveries; food from the earth, and the process of goldmaking.

The scientist showed them tablets made from chemicals extracted from the sack of Alaskan earth and announced that the stomach in its present form as a necessary organ of the human body was destined eventually to disappear. It was developed, he said, as a result of the heavy loads thrown into the esophagus, and would subside gradually and permanently, when the cause was removed and food supplied in direct and pre-digested form. What was the use of eating a pound of waste to get an ounce of nutrition? Why expand the stomach to balloon proportions with a thimble-full of real food? With two quarts of pure water and an ounce of the concentrated earth-food, an athlete could subsist in perfect health and strength for twenty-four hours.

He told them what every school boy and girl knew where Socialism was known, and what any physiology could prove: that the human body was, in the main, pure water. Then he proceeded to name the different chemicals of which the human organism

was composed, and unmercifully scolded them for their criminal ignorance of the one vital science—the study of *Self*. Flesh life was of the same stuff as plant life, and the elements of all were to be found in a handful of mud. Why not replace the worn-out tissues direct from the source of supply, instead of taking a life to get an inferior article at third hand?

“If the captain of a ship discovers a mast worn out, or in decay, does he proceed to fill up the *step* with dirt, plant a spruce tree seed there and then sit down to wait for the tree to grow into a mast?” he inquired jestingly. Then he proceeded seriously with the answer. “No, not he. The source of supply is visited, a tree cut from the forest, the waste cut away and the mast shaped and stepped after the manner of men who know what is wanted and how to obtain it. But when the human ship wears and is consumed at a given point, its captain proceeds to scratch the earth among the very substances his organism needs; plants some seeds, cultivates a crop of weeds, grass, corn and mangelwurzels, raises a bull until he’s four years old on the crops he raised from the seed, then he kills the bull like a coward and a murderer and ignorantly eats him like a wild cannibal!”

Here he gave them the list of ingredients of the body, and told his hearers that any chemist could prepare enough food for a

thousand men a year from ten square feet of earth, and still have the earth. Here was the list: carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, sulphur, phosphorus, chlorine, flourine, silicon, sodium, potassium, lithium, calcium, magnesium, iron and manganese. Traces of other metals and minerals there were, but the most important among the organic matter were the carbon dioxides, common salt, and water. These men walked over; starved for want of, and mingled their bones among because of their criminal ignorance of life. "The time will surely come when a man may live a thousand years; but before that time comes, man will have studied and learned some of the simple fundamentals concerning the science of organic life," he told them.

"The city of San Francisco is built upon the crust of a vast gas bubble." he warned them. "The centre of this earth is frozen as hard as the hardest diamond; but near the surface are numberless subterranean lakes and rivers and caves. Also, there are combustible fuels in great quantities and profusion buried just below the surface under the ephemeral stucco, where they are constantly undergoing changes in obedience to the Great Law."

Volcanoes, he informed his hearers, were the result of bursting gas bubbles thrown up above large deposits of these spontaneously combusted fuel mines. All moun-

tains were the result of such combustion, except the long range formations, which resulted mainly from glacial activity, and under such as these was stored the fuel which caused all the seismic disturbances. There were the Sierras; they rested over lakes and rivers of oil, beds of coal and bubbles of gas. "There is a salt-water sink a thousand feet deep right under this city," he said, "and into it constantly plays the harbor tides from the green Pacific. Occasionally there falls from the concave roof of this earth-bubble a few million tons of washed down crust, and there is said to have occurred an earthquake! No one ever investigates to see what caused the shakeup, and the soothsayers call it 'an act of Providence!' Such things have never been understood, scientifically, and so they were feared and claimed by superstition.

"In 1906 this vicinity was severely shaken by the collapse of one of these underground caverns, and the prophets and seers announced it a punishment from the Divine Court for the sins of the grafters (of the opposition political party!). The city of San Francisco is destined to sink out of sight and disappear under the placid swell of the Pacific Ocean. It might be saved, even now; but it would cost money! It isn't worth it. It is too rotten. I shall not build my habitation over a yawning abyss of certain death."

The discovery of the process for making gold was somewhat of an accident. Knowing that all things were originally of gas, and unto gas they could be made to return, after watching the volcanic disturbances at the Pole, he contrived a miniature volcano in his laboratory on the *Agitator*, but his hope of success was small indeed.

Into an electric crucible he had thrown a quantity of chemicals, together with a handful of common salt, a lump of coal, some of the earth he had taken from the river bank, and all the different sweets, acids, carbons and the baser metals, and added enough sea water to make it a thick mud. Inside a powerful glass vacuum he placed the crucible, attached the wires, drew off the air and turned on the current. In thirty seconds the stuff had risen from a smoking mass of fiery incandescence to a sputtering solar orb of unearthly heat and whiteness, viewable only through colored glasses. The glass vacuum had behaved beautifully. He had wondered how long it would hold. Would it hold intact to the end? It was a breathless moment! For ten seconds Quimby Sands was one of many on the anxious seat! His hand gripped the screw of a valve, and when of a sudden the whole sparkling, sizzling contents foamed up, burst into billions of jets of colored light, he waved back the company and jerked

open the valve. The stuff the valve released was a stream of liquified air reduced to a temperature so cold that water frozen by it turned the edge of a steel drill.

Of course there was an explosion, but it had been anticipated and resulted in little harm other than the loss of glass, and that could easily be replaced.

It was the cold air that did it, just as he had expected. There it was, a small, irregular lump of rock—the fused and recondensed contents of the crucible. Ah! He was a god! for had he not created earth?

Nervously he fell upon his new brain-child. It was not hard to see that the mass of stone was streaked with metals; but it was not until after he had crushed and separated it that he found the thing to be nearly one-fourth pure yellow gold.

With the public announcement that there was a man living who knew how to make gold in any quantity, and for a few cents a ton, the press got busy and the country went wild. What of the "Gold Standard," the money market, the gold bonds, the national debts, payable in gold, and all the hundred and one other dependencies of a restricted and highly inflated standard of monetary values? But Quimby Sands was interested neither in mediums of exchange, debts, credits nor riches. His was a mission of rescue—the rescue of his fellowmen

from the heavy yoke of that very yellow thing—*gold*. He would take it up with them later. At present there was some rapid work to be done.

They had planned to run down the coast past Mexico, Guatamala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, slip through the Panama Canal and make a swift run through the Caribbean Sea, the Yucatan Channel and across the Gulf of Mexico to New Orleans. The trip up the Mississippi to St. Louis could be made in a day, and would end the long cruise.

But they got word through the Red Cadets that there was a capitalist conspiracy on foot to trap them in the Graftor's Ditch, and for no good purpose; so at a suggestion from his father, young Sands made a landing at San Juan Del Sur, Nicaragua, got in communication with the government at Managu, one of the new Co-operative Commonwealths, and in just forty-eight hours perfected a commission to dig the long proposed Nicaraguan Canal from Brito, on the Pacific, to Lake Nicaragua, thence to Greyton, in the Caribbean Sea, some one hundred miles.

The *Agitator* indicated the course from a chart furnished by the government, and the *Comet* did the work. Word had been flashed on ahead to the natives to retire from the zone of activity when the *finder ray* should appear. With everything in

readiness, on New Year's Eve, up shot the *radium pillar* and down came the *finder* in in a thin fan-shaped angle, reaching from coast to lake and lighting the way for the *Comet*. And then the fun began.

Going up a half mile over the lighted course, the little fire-fly adjusted the focus, gave the signal, and turned on the current!

She began right at the very shore, fusing ocean, forest, trees, rock and earth into gas, and at the same time igniting and consuming the gas; it was a sight describable only by future minds. Away she sped, over the course and back again, cutting a channel a hundred feet wide and thirty feet below sea level, from coast to lake, and in less than an hour's time. Into this flowed the sea, and in another hour the *Agitator* had passed through, had crossed the lake and the performance had been repeated on the other side through to the Caribbean. It was a costless job, soon over, and it put the ancient ditch digging methods to everlasting shame.

Of course the news spread, and many receptions were planned by the people along the route; but there was Ben Page on board frozen up in ice, probably unretrievably dead—possibly not. They were bound for St. Louis, and they were in a hurry.

“Just a little more air today, and raise the temperature half a degree,” ordered

the wizard prince. Then turning to the five others, continued: "We will leave him now with the experts and the captain. Tomorrow we will increase the temperature a full degree, a full degree each day thereafter, doubling the dose every other day, and with plenty of color, tune and air, in a month we will have him out of the ice, and in two months he will walk with me in Forest Park."

They were lying now at the foot of the west pier of the Eads Bridge, in the muddy old Mississippi. The city had been tipped off and the levee was lined with 300,000 souls. The Red Cadets, 50,000 strong, marshalled Washington Avenue and Delmar Boulevard from the river to University City, where the *American Woman's League*, the first great Woman's Democracy, was in convention at Delmar Garden.

There was much speaking, President Lewis leading in the addresses of welcome. Also there was much cheering by 100,000 women suffragists, members of the League. The membership of this league were not all Socialists, as yet, but they were all co-operators, and many Red Cadets were the sons and daughters of these splendid progressive women. They would all become Socialists in time, Quimby Sands knew that, for it was only the progressive who had ever changed. Jason Sands was introduced amid thunderous applause, and that

evening the *Agitator* gave her usual exhibition with the *pillar* and the *ray*, and the climax was capped with the performance of the *Comet* over the city.

One month later six men, the same six who had placed him in the ice cabinet while in the Arctic Ocean, gathered anxiously around a glass table upon which rested the nude body of Ben Page. There were spectators present, including the Dean of the Washington University Medical College; Dean of the St. Louis College of Physicians and Surgeons; Editor Brumby of the *Moon*, and the good priest from the St. Vitus Rock Church.

With the drawing of the frost was applied the air-blast massage machines, the high-power electric internal bath, the exhilaratory respirator, and a powerful colored ray. Stimulants were administered at intervals by the scientists aboard, and the tune machines were regulated by the junior Sands himself. There had been anxious moments, which had increased to hours, days and weeks, as the ice had disappeared and the white frost came and went and the cell life of this precious human organism began to show color and faint signs of returning life activity.

Imagine the scene of modest victory among the little group of watching, working, pantomimic scientists, when at the third hour after the bodily temperature

had been restored to normal, the cardio-graph recorded a trace of collateral circulation, followed almost immediately by a very weak, but regular, action of the heart. There was color in the cheeks now, and the lungs were filling and expelling the breath regularly with a watery rattle, which rattle the oxygen machines soon relieved.

The young genius was bending down, peering into the motionless features, when Jason Sands swung his huge body alongside his son with a single stride of his great crutches, and whispered something in the radiant youth's ear. There was a hurried undertone conversation; the younger man stepped back; the old warrior advanced to the motionless figure of his old companion, took both his hands in his own, looked straight at the closed eyes and uttered a loud, peculiar cry. It was, indeed, a peculiar cry. It sounded like "Oo-o-wow-oo-o-o-o," starting low with the "Oo," and rising higher and higher, until the highest pitch poised almost at the breaking point over the centre of the "wow," it slid down, down over the "o-o-o's" and off into the deep chest of the man who had sounded it. There was a slight, spasmodic jerking of the finger tips, but aside from this Ben Page gave no sign that he had heard. Three times was the cry repeated. The last was louder than the rest, and had in it all of

both the courage and terror born of a danger-inheritance; all the woes and anguish of a starving world of broken hopes and broken hearts. And it went out in a mournful plaint, tremulous with despair, and cold as the arctic glacier which for four years had held Ben Page frozen in its hyemal fangs. As the last gutteral moan died away the old giant of the mountains placed his lips close to the frost-bitten patient and called sharply, in a loud voice: "Ben! Ben! Ben Page! Wolves, Ben! Wolves!"

They were magic words, freighted with ominous dread. As the ear drums received and vibrated the familiar sounds against the sensitive discs of the brain cells, there was a perceptible quivering of the lips; the sagging jaw came together with a sharp clip; a tremor agitated the prostate form, and the eyes of Ben Page opened, glared about wildly, and rested upon other eyes—eyes that were big, wide apart and shaded by heavy snow-white brows.

There had been no prayers said, no stink-pots twirled, no God-appeasing sacrifices offered, nor other forms of superstitious monkey-shining indulged in; and a man had been raised from the dead!

The deans proclaimed it a miracle; the good priest from the St. Vitus Rock Church denounced it as the Devil's doings, crossed

himself and fled from the ship. But Science stood erect, looked Ignorance in the eye, and said: "Be not afraid, it is I."

The next day Quimby and Jason Sands were arrested for "practicing medicine without a license!"

Absurd as it may seem, yet it is true, nevertheless, that was the law. Of course, that there were two deans present made no difference. And that there were three graduated physicians on board—members of the ship's company, was not sufficient excuse for evading the laws of the Great State of Missouri! Hadn't Jason Sands administered the wolf call? The fact of the matter was, that neither Quimby Sands nor Jason Sands had any diploma to show that they had paid a lot of money for a stereotyped permit to legally murder a sick man. It was a law that the doctor trust lobbied through the Legislature, and under it never again might an old woman lay in a supply of herbs from the fields, nor poultice a boil on her old man's nose. Neither might one say, "try the exercise of mental self-control," for such advice constituted the "practice of medicine," as had previously been proven in the case of Prof. Evertz, mental scientist, and was in violation of a trust-made law of the Great State of Missouri! But to be thrown into a medical slot machine and ground out a licensed physician, was to legalize anything with the

coin to kill a well man with impunity; while for a layman to raise the dead was a crime against the Great State of Missouri!

When the trial came off, although no case was made against the defendants, marvelous to relate, both were ordered found guilty before a jury in Judge Moth's Court of Criminal Correction and fined fifty dollars and costs! Ben Page was there as a witness for the state, and required to testify against his friends and benefactors. Ben had read his subpoena over and over again, wherein was this injunction: "Fail not to be there at your peril," wrote, "Go to hell" on the back of it and mailed it back to the court. But when the farce was staged Ben was there, and got sent to the city jail for six months for contempt of court and for knocking five teeth down old State's Attorney Basswood's throat for referring to Quimby Sands as "the lawless son of an old backwoods hobo."

Here was more trouble. But there was no help for it. Ben had to go.

There was no getting of Jason Sands away from St. Louis as long as his resurrected former partner in the Broken Bone Mine was in prison. It was the last straw. Why could not Ben have foreborne! But he would not censure him, for, had Ben not done it, secretly in his own heart he knew that he would have been there instead, and most likely for a longer term. Besides,

Ben's experience with courts of justice" had been limited to the justice of Right, in the court of Conscience, where man bulks big and first above the dollar sign.

The decline of Jason Sands from that hour was rapid and sure. He had stood the trip around the world remarkably well, rallying from that awful wolf fight and the loss of his limb and blood, with the finding of his son; but he had never been the same. It had been a long, uphill pull. Over him a leaden veil seemed falling to drag him down. When he left the Broken Bone on that pregnant April night back in 1910, his one thought was of the old home; but came the reunion on the *Agitator* to modify this, though the old longing still slumbered in his heart.

One day he called his son to his side, looked long and lovingly into his glowing face, and taking him fondly by the hand said: "Quim, I hate to mar your happiness, but your father's work is over! I can feel it coming on me, a kind of sinking, and a numbness gets in my veins, prickling like needle points. I'm not laying down, Quim, but I've told you how it is, and you understand. I wanted to go back there once more where She is; but I guess it's too late. I know you would have taken me, but I could not say the word when you had so much to do for others. You are a great

young man, and you are destined to be greater. You are my son, my only son—all I have left in this world—and I am well pleased in you; but I shall have to leave you before long, and it may be very soon. Take care of Ben, Quim, and take care of yourself; for there's going to be war here! Mark my word, boy, there's going to be *war!* It will be an *internal* war, and it will be here before another Presidential election rolls around. It will be between Capital and Labor. It will be the business of the Boy Scouts to protect the property of the rich and murder their fathers and brothers. It will be bitter, revengeful and to a finish."

"But, Father, you must not say you are going to be ill. You forget that you are on board the *Agitator*, and that we don't permit the presence of the Gaunt Goddess on this craft. Don't be alarmed. We will pull you through, and when you feel well enough, I will take you in the *Comet* back where your heart lies buried. And believe me, Father, there will be no more war. Trust that to the Red Cadets," encouraged the son warmly.

But the old man refused to be consoled, and his illness came in spite of all that could be done to prevent it. It was the sequel to a partial stroke of valvular paralysis of the heart, caused partly by grief and partly by excessive violent exertion,

The sickness that should have killed all but one in a million, held him down for sixteen long months, during which there was never a moment when he was not under the watchful eye of modern Science. His life was saved at last, and once more the mind had mastered.

In the meantime Ben Page had served his term, and then another six months for licking the craven judge who had sent him up. It was too much for Ben—the St. Louis idea of justice! Nor did he ever get it quite figured out just how it all came about that he found himself there; but one thing he knew: he was not going to stay! He would foot it back to Alaska, wolves or no wolves. But when he learned that gold was no longer mined, but manufactured, and that there was no market for it now other than as material for cooking utensils, water-pipes and other devises of use and ornamentation, he changed his mind and agreed to accompany the *Comet* and her party to New Hampshire, whither his old chum Jason was bound.

It came in the spring of 1916. Jason was right, there was going to be war! The Western Federation of Miners, the I. W. Ws. and the American Federation of Labor had joined the Industrial Co-operative Democrats on the industrial field, and declared for Socialism, and the Socialist Party, on the political field. At their May convention

in New York, the American Woman's Suffrage League had declared for Socialism, and had endorsed the Socialist Party by a standing vote, which was unanimous and enthusiastic. Next came the American Woman's League with its million members all into the great International Socialist Party. The pot was boiling now, and still active were the Red Cadets, heaping the dry fuel of classified Socialist propaganda continually on the fire of the Social Revolution. They worked among their classmates at school, invited them to their picnics, platted off the towns and cities, assigned wards, precincts, streets and block to various regiments, posts, companies and commands, which saw to it that every individual was known, classified and regularly visited with papers, pamphlets, books and music; and it was wonderful the amount of literature they sold.

Then came the Socialist convention in St. Louis, in June, 1916. If the pot had boiled before, it was foaming now! There was harmony at last, and the entire Socialist ticket was bound to carry in November. Capitalism was madly tearing its hair for an issue. The "good men" (for bad offices) bug was played out. They had pulled off the last raw deal. They were at the last ditch. *Something must be done!* It would never do to let the Socialists win at the polls! That would mean the end of

capitalistic reign forever! That would mean that profits from human labor must cease! Wall Street would have to shut up shop and board up its windows! Graft would be at an end. Child slavery could exist no more. Poverty would vanish like mist before the noonday sun, and Labor would become respectable. But overshadowing all this like a terrible curse, hung the awful threat of Socialism that it would put the parasites to work earning their own living at some sort of honest labor. It would never do! It was preposterous! It was un-Christian and un-Godly! It would destroy their incentive—to steal! It would bring them all down to the dead level of those from whose bended backs they had so long sucked the blood of their sustenance like bedbugs and lice!

Of course, it was optional whether they should work or not; but the alternative was death by starvation, and it would be up to them.

And then the thing happened. The Dick Military Law had made it possible. Morgan had said that Labor should be dealt with with an iron hand at the proper time. The real purpose of the Boy Scouts was known at last. Jason was a prophet. Government spies had been busy ringing doorbells, and every male citizen was spotted. The Beast was arrogant, blind and drunken with wealth and power. That its class had been

overthrown and driven out of every other nation, taught this American Beast no lesson. It had the guns and it proposed to use them. Secretly, at first, in all the big cities began to appear the soldiers. Every train brought a few more of these cowards in their yellow cotton uniforms, yellow as the yellow of their murderous hearts. The "Regulars" they were, and as Taft once told the Cubans in a public speech, "they were the scum and the off-scourings of the civilized earth." They knew not why they were in St. Louis, but they were there, and the streets were full of them. That they were there with full cartridge belts buckled around their pretty waists outside their corsets, and with shotted and bayoneted guns, a two-foot hand scythe and a foot-and-a-half automatic pistol at their hips, was the only other thing they knew besides that they were there to obey orders. That it might be their fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers or sweethearts whom they were to kill, entered not into their understanding. They had no understanding. There was nothing in their little tin heads with which to understand anything but "orders" and the smell of blood. They were soldiers in the "land of the free (lunch) and the home of the brave," and were they not brave? Let the order come to shoot, they would show 'em! They would shoot to kill!

And so it came to pass that Labor was to massacre itself! It was the last and only remaining method of preventing a Socialist victory at the polls. Something was to be started—anything—just to get them all into a fight, when the workers and Socialist agitators were to be corralled like a game drive and shot to pieces like so many rabbits.

It was a grand scheme, which consisted of nagging labor until they should succeed in nagging it into an open breach of the peace, when the Maxims and muskets were to spit lead and steel into the unarmed hosts of toil from every street corner. They had tried to pull the deal off twice before, once when they kidnapped the Western Federation of Miners' officials, and later when the Interests succeeded in wringing stereotyped confessions from the O'Mara brothers with the aid of a \$10,000,000 bribe, at Angels Gate, California. That was back in the year of 1911, when a deep-laid plot—deeper than Labor knew—was consummated through years of devilish dealings, leading all the way up from the farming of dynamite bonds to the buying of labor councils, pulpits, press, courts and lawyers—even to the purchase of the O'Maras, who, for a fee, and the promise of a pardon after three years of prison freedom, pleaded guilty to a foul and cowardly detective's bloody crime.

The purpose of all this was plain: In order to successfully make war on Labor, first Labor must be discredited and public opinion framed up on the side of steel and rope and lead—otherwise known as “law and order.” But about this time Progress took another step forward. A co-operative syndicate publishing company was formed, for the purpose of printing and distributing a local Socialist weekly newspaper in every town and village in the country. And so the people got to hear both sides of the question and were able to judge accordingly.

The coal and iron mines were now closed down, and for three months not a wheel had turned in any of the great steel mills. There was a panic on, and Labor was locked out from access to the means of life. Millions of dispossessed workers and their starving families were tramping the streets, half-clad and menacing, while the store-houses groaned with the bursting abundance of the surplus wealth their own hands had created. The press-made hero *incumbrance* of the White House—for two consecutive inflictions—had been renominated and was running for a third term, and organized labor was working feverishly to hold back a threatened general strike.

In St. Louis the factories were closed and the people were starving and sleeping out in vacant lots and in graveyards. St. Louis was

a great shoe manufacturing centre; but there was the Jackson-Green slave pen, which turned out the "American Magdalene" shoe for the Red Light trade, with windows and doors closed and shuttered like a tomb.

It was here in this crashing inferno that Jason Sands had worked ten hours a day, operating a "Niggerhead" lasting machine —the one machine of all the machinery of earth, known as the "man-killer" of wage-slavery. It was the invention of a negro, who died in an insane asylum after his invention had been stolen from him. Hence the appellation, "Niggerhead." It was the invention of this machine which revolutionized the shoe industry. And still they say there are no revolutions but bloody revolutions! For thousands of years all shoes had been lasted by hand; and to pull over and last 120 pairs in a day was considered the best of speed. "No machine can ever be invented that will last a shoe," the old hand-lasters would chuckle, whenever a new device would come into the factories to displace some archaic hand method. But the "Niggerhead" came, and with it went out the hand-laster, never to return. With its cold steel jaws snapping and biting into the leather, one man operating and three others pulling over, it could turn out from 600 to 1,000 pairs a day, where by hand only a beginning could be made. Into these steel jaws often went

the fingers of the operators, and on three occasion had Jason's been bitten and crushed to the bone in the sateless jaws of this grim iron monster. This was the machine invented by a poor negro, and stolen by a rich capitalist, which made the great Shoe Machinery Trust, a hundred million dollar corporation, tribute to which every human being in America, and in nearly all the rest of the civilized world, had paid, for more than twenty-five years without a protest.

And then of a sudden the mask fell from the Dick Military Law, when, on the 13th day of August, 1916, every Socialist and trade unionist was visited with a military order commanding him to report at the Armory or militia headquarters immediately, ready for active service! It was a nation-wide mandate, any non-observance of which, the summons read, would be considered an act of treason, punishable by court martial, *at the hands of militia officers only!* It meant, "come and shoot yourselves, or the Regulars will shoot you!"

"Shoot or be shot," was the urkus. But we shall see how, with the coming of the Red Cadets, it was destined to be obeyed.

"Father, was my mother a very beautiful woman?"

The *Agitator* had slipped her moorings in the night and had dropped down the river opposite Carondelet, and was lying

there on the bottom of the Mississippi, when Quimby Sands drew up his chair beside his father's and asked the foregoing startling question. For answer, his enfeebled sire unbuttoned his shirt at the throat and drew forth a small, smoothly-worn gold locket. Opening it with reverent touch, he gazed silently upon the tiny daguerreotype in colors there, until a splash of wet fell upon the hand that held it, then he passed the locket without speaking to his adoring son.

One hour later a streak of white fire burst from the muddy bosom of the old Mississippi, circled the beleaguered city, scattered a ton of anti-war leaflets down on the heads of the startled populace, opened the current for full speed ahead and in a jiffy was out of sight on her record run straight for the hills of old New Hampshire.

CHAPTER XII.

NOT EVEN IN THE GRAVE!

I saw an eagle soar a mountain by the sea
 Long, long ago!
I saw an ancient, dead, and moss-grown tree
 Fall in the snow!
To-day I stood again—my son and I—
 The verdue 'mong,
Where that old monarch reigned, at last to die,
 And saw a young,
Tall giant oak, that from his mould did rise
 In grand attire,
To beckon vernal greetings to the skies
 As did his sire.
Nor drifted snows, but springtime as of yore
 When youth was gay.
Nor eagle, but a *bird-man* came to soar
 The mount to-day!

When Rec Cotton and Jennie Drew, accompanied by the entire membership of the struggling little local at Ashworth, came over the brow of the western ridge next morning, they were radiant with cheerfulness, optimism and hope. People who are accustomed to hardship and danger are slow to admit defeat. Little did they dream of what had transpired the night just passing; but as they drew nearer the commotion among the chickens and stock attracted their attention and quickened their pace.

The snow was slumpy, and they came up the drifted lane single file and with laborious tread. Rec was in the lead and at the corner of the old mansion he paused, turned to the others and pointed without speaking at a faint red glow shining through a small clear spot in the frosty west window. Then they rushed the oaken door and stormed into the bleak old house. It was empty, silent, and cold!

On the kitchen table lay a letter in a soiled, unstamped envelope. The envelope had been opened a long time since, for it was addressed in a feminine hand to Jason Sands. It was one of the bundle of letters that had come from Alaska, and Jennie Drew hesitated, almost guiltily, as she scanned its contents. There were many soiled thumb marks around the margin, and below a pretty butterfly printed in colors she read these words in faded violet ink:

“Raven Roost, Oct. 18, 1890.

“Jason, Dearest one—Come over to the husking, Saturday night, love. Leland will see about the music, and I shall make the pumpkin pies. Belle and Fred are coming, and there’ll be fun, O, my husband!

“I’ve put three red ears in one shock and marked it for you and I. O you rogue!

“God bless and keep you, my dear, big boy.”

“ERMA.”

Jennie was greatly moved and clearly disappointed, and was folding the letter to

put it back in its soiled envelope when she caught sight of something written coarsely in pencil on the back, and read:

“To Whoever Finds This:

“I know it’s wrong fer ter do it, but they ain’t no more to stay fer, and I’m agoin’ where peace is. You will find what’s left of me in the barn, and I want to be laid away in the lot yender where the others be at rest. I ain’t agoin’ to Heaven, fer God is agin this ear thing; but I’ve been as good as they’d let me be, and it comes hard to be driv out of the world. Erma went asmilin’ and is restin’ peaceful. And Jason will never come.

“I hain’t no will, but what’s left of mine arfter settlin’ up I want Stanley Lark to have; fer he’ll use it doin’ the will of Humanity’s God.

“Them that’s been at outs with me is fergi’n, but I’ve been crucified and driv out. Be good to Black Raven and Old Bess; they hain’t never had no abuse, and they be all that’ll miss me when I’m gone.

“Goodbye,

“ L. B. TANNERHILL.”

Jennie had just finished reading the awful missive when the men rushed in from the barn to confirm the sad tidings. There they had found the body, lifeless and rigid, hanging from the great beams by the raw-hide thong.

There was a fuss over the property, resulting in the town stepping in and taking possession. Of course the Socialists were powerless to sustain their claim, there being neither date nor witness to the alleged will. Moreover, they made the testator out an irresponsible victim of insanity, although the physician who dressed his wound in the Town Hall gave controversial testimony. That the old man was perfectly sane when he wrote that letter there was never the slightest doubt in any man's mind; but there was "pickings" on a dead man's bones and the vultures had beaks with which to tear!

It was at about this time that the Lakeport-Lakeshore & Bald Mountain Railway Co. was organized at Boston, a corporation with \$100,000,000 capital. That its chief stockholders were the very millionaires who summered at The Bridge was considered a great feather in the social cap of that hibernating country bailiwick. Opening offices in Lakeport, The Weirs, Meredith Village, Centre Harbor and Ashworth, it began the sale of stock with the most supercilious *sang-froid*, and in high-handed contempt of the fact that no franchise had as yet been granted it, it possessed no charter, and no assurance that it could ever get permission from the state to lay a rail.

But the L. L. & B. M. R. R. Co. knew its business!

With a snug block of one thousand shares tucked away in his inside pocket, any other preacher less mercenary than the Right Rev. Yancel Lea must also have been "inspired" to preach long-winded sermons in favor of the "wonderful civilizing influences of railroads" passing through a rural community! All commentaries bearing on the dangers, noise, and disfiguring effects on the beautiful mountain landscape were ventured only by the honest farmers scattered along the route, and these fell flat and unheeded on the groomed ears of the bloated politicians, like winnowed chaff on a stagnant pool.

In the year 1916 the much discussed "Lakeshore," as it had boiled down to, had completed its line around Lake Winnepe-saukee from Laconia to North Sandwich west of Red Hill, and rooted up its ugly trail the length of the beautiful north-western boundary of the old Squam Lake to the Tannerhill uplands. All opposition had subsided and its victory was complete. And so, when it leaked out that a hundred foot cut had been surveyed right through the middle of the old mountain graveyard, a threatened storm of protest arose, but was quickly preached down.

That deacon Jedediah Cousins had received a complimentary hundred shares of the L. L. & B. M. R. R. preferred, was a secret that had *never* leaked out. As a

matter of fact, the company had bribed or gotten "removed" every public servant, from hogreeve to state Senator, with from one, to ten thousand shares of its stock; and that's the way the L. L. & B. M. R. R. Bill came to be passed in the state legislature.

In Ashworth, where six years before, Stanley Lark had delivered the speech that brought down the wrath of the god of Capitalism and the *Aberrant*, there was a link in the chain of the Red Cadets, a chapter of the American Woman's League, a key of the Industrial Co-operative Democrats, and the membership of all carried the red card of the Socalist Party. The local had grown until it had assimilated the majority and the best of every political party, controlled the schools, and dominated every sect, religious creed and secret society, and had become "respectable," with the respectability of numerical strength! It was on every tongue, that the Socialists were bound to sweep everything at the coming election; and that's why, more than for any other reason, they had become popular.

As the day approached for the annual Labor Day picnic, excitement ran high. As usual, there was to be a week of it in their beautiful lakeshore park at the Bridge; and many white tents already dotted the green turf just back of the white sandy beach. The Red Cadets were the first to get the news of it, for they had the most perfect

system and code of wireless telegraphy in the country; Jason Sands was to be the guest of honor, and Quimby Sands, the young inventor of the *Comet* and *Agitator*, and founder of the Red Cadets, was to deliver the Labor Day address. The word had gone out to all the surrounding villages, and accommodations for ten thousand had been arranged.

And then of a sudden, when hearts were filled with joy and the faces of old and young were alight with promise of peace that should never end, over the face of the earth rolled the horrid black cloud of war! The Socialists—the people were for peace; but Wall Street—the kennel of Capitalism—had no such “mollycoddle” ideas. Only by war could Capitalism perpetuate itself. With the Presidential election only two months off, and labor organized to a man, it would never do to allow the popular celebration of Labor Day, and so martial law was declared, and every male citizen between the ages of eighteen and forty-five was notified to report for enrollment at the Town Hall.

This was the state of affairs in which the Sands party found itself, when, on the morning of September the first, 1916, the *Comet*, cutting the air at full speed, descended in a corkscrew spiral and alighted in the street at Ashworth in front of the Holiness Tavern.

And now was to come the clash—the final test of strength. It was the few against the many; bullet against brain; greed against intelligence, and military power against working class solidarity.

The Beast, Capitalism, was entrenched behind the bristling breastworks of every war device known to civilized barbarism.

Labor was standing erect on the field, guided by truth and reason, and armed only with the justice of its cause.

Capitalism commanded the army and navy, but Labor commanded the gears and levers!

Capitalism possessed powder and lead, Labor possessed the power to create and supply bread.

The Beast could bawl orders from behind parapets of stone and steel, but Labor could lie down in its attic chamber or in the shade of the green forests, while around the bloody claws of the helpless Beast must crawl the maggots of decay.

Capitalism had reckoned only its authority; Labor reckoned its numbers.

Capitalism possessed the dry papers of ownership; Labor possessed the creative energy and muscular strength. Also, Labor possessed a solid phalanx of unbroken unionism and co-operative will. Added to which, Labor had achieved the woman suffrage, and in every state in the Union, the wives and mothers, sisters and sweethearts

of the progressive workers were now recognized as human beings, and were allowed to vote.

They never came to blows. One day of it was enough for the Beast. Instantly following the War Department's martial edict, was issued from the headquarters of the Industrial Democrats, the order for the General Strike! It was flashed to the secretary of every branch in the United States and the tie-up was complete. It lasted just twenty-four hours, during which time not a single soul who worked for wages lifted a hand. The wireless system of the Socialists was so complete, that when the order was clicked off to stop work at sunset, Standard time, it was caught up everywhere on the instant. Even running trains and ships along the coast received it; for ships and trains like factories and mines, were operated by workingmen.

On the blistering desert two trains, passing each other, one a freight, the other a lightning express, shut off steam, dumped their fires, put on the breaks and came to a stop, one beside the other on the double tracks of the great Union Pacific. A Great White Star liner, bound for Liverpool, caught the message as she was getting under way just outside New York Harbor. In five minutes her fires were banked, the wheel lashed, and her two huge anchors

firmly hooked to the muddy bottom of the Sound.

Other trains and other ships were likewise held up, wherever they happened to be. Factories, mines, street railways and light and water supplies suffered with the rest, as did telephone and telegraph systems, butcher, bakers, dairies and the employers of house servants. Offices were closed. Banks were closed. The Postal system was tied up, and the War Department was beside itself with fury.

A troop-train crossing a trestle, in some mysterious way broke a coupling and was left standing there, while the engine and tender pulled on into the night. Then it was learned that neither brakeman nor conductor were to be found on board the stalled train! And what, under the circumstances, was to be done?

And so it came to pass, that the Beast, being unschooled in the art of feeding himself, waxed anhungered and sore athirst. Peradventure he might find for the places of his striking slaves, large quantities of hungry scabs—happy thought! So he be-stirred himself and wandered forth into the glooming, making cooing sounds in imitation of the turtledove. Alas, his siren songs fell unheeded upon the painted ears of a wooden Indian! There were no more scabs, save for the ulcers of riotous living upon its own scurvy back.

Then the Beast became exceeding wroth! Down the silent empty streets it tore through the back yard of the Execution Mansion, coatless and collarless, clad principally in 300 pounds of negligee fat, a pair of size 12 calfskins and a "God knows" look of deep concern.

The *Daily Liar* held forth just around the corner, and undeviating thither the Beast hied himself; for was it not, forsooth, the mouthpiece of the Beast's Regime?

At the elevator he jabbed a large and juicy thumb eleven times against the white bell button, then proceeded to climb twenty-seven flights of narrow iron stairs, puffing like the proverbial porpoise the while, and exuding generously of that epidermiferous moisture in which God is said to have admonished Mr. Adam and Miss Eva to eat their daily bread.

In the familiar region of the editorial sanctum he paused for wind, mopped his troubled brow, and made copious sounds like the dollar sign; but the only response that came echoing through the silent corridors was the lonesome cry of the hungry office cat.

Back rushed the Beast to the White (washed) House of Capitalism. But when he found that robbers' roost vacant of servants he was ready to sue for peace.

Labor had stood upon its feet; and Capitalism had fallen on its knees for mercy. Labor, the giant, had spoken the word; and Capitalism, the pygmy, had bent the knee. United Labor, the god, had struck at the task; and now it was going to strike at the ballot box as it had struck at the task—*united*. There was no parading of the streets; no mob violence; no speech-making and no demands. Labor had simply gone home, locked itself indoors and waited. Labor had struck scientifically, and it had won. It was its first and last real strike.

At Ashworth, the truth was learned of the sad end of Leland Tannerhill back in 1910. The grief of Jason Sands was pitiful indeed. Also, it was patent that he was rapidly failing in strength. On the Saturday morning before Labor Day, he called his son to his side and said: “Quim, there’s a voice that sounds familiar calling me at the journey’s end. I am well enough today, come, let us go. I want to see the old mansion. I want to see the trees and the rocks where she and I used to steal away among the shadows in secret to tell the old forbidden story. And I want to stand once more by her side, where there is peace and rest, the peace and rest that is secure and certain. Come. It is time to go.”

It was a short eight miles for the *Comet*. She alighted under the great maple in the dooryard by the old well-house in front of

Raven Roost mansion. And Oh! the Raven Roost that it had come to be!

Weeds and burdock grew tall around the saddle-back barn, whose doors had blown down and whose timbers were sagging to their fall. From a great beam directly over the middle of the floor still dangled some of the rawhide thong, marking the place where died alone the friend of all living things, the great white-souled hermit. Not by his own hand, as the corporation-owned *Aberrant* had said, but as a result of the slow poison administered at the hands of the capitalist system, of which the *Aberrant* was one virulent fang.

The chimney had split in the centre and was ready to fall; and in the old house the rooms were bare. Everything had been stripped away save a portrait of a feminine beauty that still clung askew to the wall. It was the picture of Erma, taken on the day when she was married in secret to Jason Sands. Jason hobbled forward to straighten it; but with the first touch the rusty wire gave way, letting it fall into his outstretched arms. Tenderly and wistfully he looked into the soft brown eyes, until his hands trembled and his sight blurred. Placing it, at length, on the dusty mantel he edged through the door when the others were not looking and slipped out unobserved among the trees.

There were evidences of an auction having been held on the premises, when, in all probability the antique furnishings had been disposed of at high prices to the sum-
merers.

Ben Page was in the party, but he had started out on an investigation excursion all by himself and was not missed until he called out sharply from the kitchen fireplace: "I'll 'low that freezin' up in 'Lasky and gettin' thawed out in St. Louis is goin' some, and bein' eat up and disgorged b' wolves is goin' some more; but in the here-after I ain't agoin' tue have no nuts work luse over marikles. Bersides I hain't been hit like this yere's ahittin' me sense Jase left me an empty shack t' come home tue on the Broken Bone." As he finished speaking the man whose life Quimby Sands had so miraculously given back to hin, laid the packages sent from Alaska in which had come the nugget of gold and Jason's love letters, together with an old plush-covered album in that young man's hands. It seemed that Leland, thinking Jason dead and wishing to leave behind as little belonging to their sacred love as possible, had, on the night he stepped over the threshold into the dark depths of the Unknown, stuffed the bundles into the brick oven, lighted some damp paper and thrown it after them, then closed the door without opening the damper. Ben, whose curiosity was large

like the generosity of his heart, had pried open the rusty oven door and drawn them forth. The nugget of gold Leland had forced upon Stanley Lark as a memento of their friendship which had been so dear.

It was at this juncture that Jason was missed, by all hands at the same time. The last that anyone could remember of him was that he had placed the picture of his dead wife on the mantel. No one saw him leave and the house was searched from cellar to attic without avail. Into and under the old barn next they scurried, looking in every secret hole and corner, and then some one thought of the well. But it took no second look to ascertain that nothing could have fallen down through the network of cobwebs which completely screened its black mouth. It was Ben Page who solved the mystery. Ben was a woodsman and knew all the tricks of the trailer. "This way," he called from the edge of the maple grove, "he's tuck tue the bresh and like's not's over tother side of the mountain and half way t' Canady by this time; fer them's his crotch holes in them there leaves, or I'm a yarler dog barkin' up the wrong tree at a quillpig 'stead of a coon."

Sure enough! the crutches had left an easy trail. At a signal from young Sands the *Comet's* crew took their places, and the search began in real earnest from above, while Ben held to the course below. The

airship had scarcely cleared the tree tops when her great lenses, focused on the old burying ground, revealed the secret. Also it revealed more than a secret—it revealed a horror—a twentieth century capitalistic horror!

There was Jason Sands at the grave of his lost wife, Erma, wildly leaping on his one good leg among a belligerent group of silk-hatted gentlemen, who were striking and kicking at him from all sides, his crutches smashed with the first onslaught. He had tried to slip away alone, that he might lie down beside her quiet tomb and give himself up to thoughts of her; but as he became more and more submerged in the familiar depths of the great maple forest, the old premonition of some impending terror caught hold of him from every angle. The winds whispered it; the trees shuddered with it; every bough and leaf creaked and sighed because of it, and it seemed that her sweet youthful spirit flitted on before him to warn him a last time of some awful danger.

In the middle of the woods he stopped, turned sharply about, glared searchingly among the heavy foliage then pressed hurriedly on over the old path to the little churchyard. Emerging from the edge of the timber, what his eyes fell upon his brain, for the moment, was incapable of comprehending. There where had peace-

fully reposed for a hundred years the respected mold of both pioneer and progenitor, ran the ugly scar of a raw railroad cut, right through the middle of that ancient mortuary. A railroad through a graveyard, and without first removing the dead! It was beyond belief! But there it was, not quite through, but close to the western wall where the sacred dirt was fresh dug.

He hurried on. The workmen had just left for the day and were now vanishing homeward over the far side of the hill, for it was Saturday, and Saturday was a half-holiday for workingmen who build road beds for their masters.

But there were other men—fine gentlemen in stylish clothes walking briskly about, smoking costly cigars and jabbing their gold-topped canes sportively into the eyeless sockets of what once had been the skulls of men.

As the horrified husband and father swung himself rapidly nearer the awful spectacle, a shambling hulk of a brute climbed out over the ridge of dirt and bones and paused to look back, like a sheep-killing dog gloating, with satid lust, over his foul work. It was the gang boss, and toward him the huddle of prosperous-looking stock speculators moved, leaving their chugging automobiles behind; chattering, laughing and gesticulating cheerily, they approached

the clay-begrimed gang-boss and shook him warmly by the hand, as if this brute of a slave driver were some dearly beloved and long-sought friend!

With the sweat streaming from every pore, and winded from the excessive exertion, Jason paused beside a shattered head-stone, and placing the fragments together, read:

ERMA
WIFE OF JASON SANDS.
* *
MATED IN PERFECT LOVE
* *
WEDDED IN SACRED
MATRIMONY.
* *
MARTYRED
* *
SHE CAME HERE TO REST
DEC. 25th, 1890.

He had entered unobserved save by the chauffeurs, who eyed him cynically through their dusty goggles.

Yes, that was her headstone, but where was she?

There was the weeping willow and the silver birch he had planted, one at her head and the other at her feet, uprooted and dead.

He gazed half dreamily about him, a mist was before his eyes and his brain burned and throbbed like the imprisoned lava of a volcano, ready to burst forth and

consume the world. Erma's grave violated! The sanctuary of his dead wife desecrated! The last resting place of the dead virgin mother of his only son raped to garner dividends on watered stocks for the bribe-taking masters of *men with votes!*

There was no peace, *not even in the grave!*

As he stared bewilderingly and half insane with rage about him for the exact location of what had been her last abode, he did not hear the toot of an auto horn honking a signal, nor did he notice the gang boss, with bellicose mien bearing down upon him with hasty stride.

His attention had been attracted by a familiar glitter among the bones lying about his feet, and frantically he strove to control his outraged passion. Falling on his knees beside a small, feminine-looking skull, he was in the act of examining a certain familiar gold-filled tooth in the upper jaw, when the blaspheming gang-boss swooped down upon him.

“ ‘Hell ‘yer doin’ there, youze old grey stiff? Tryin’ t’ rob the dead? Get t’ hell along, or I’ll put the boot t’ yer,’ ” was his introduction to the man of sorrows. At the same time giving him a vicious push which sent the kneeling cripple sprawling on his back, and then he deliberately kicked the fragile skull over the embankment into the ditch!

It was Jason Sands' last fight! Mortal flesh and mind could not endure such as this! He knew that bleaching skull to be the relic of his one love; his only sweetheart; the wife who had so loved him that she laid down her life for him, smiling happily that thus her great love for him might find its full expression.

And then the fight began!

With the bowling over of the giant Jason, up rushed the whole mob of parasites, eager to be in with their canes or a kick in the face now that the man was down. They didn't know what it was all about, but they *did* know that they owned that graveyard, for were there not signs posted all around it warning against trespass?

Jason Sands, though grey, and an infirm cripple, was up the instant he was down. It was the first time in his life that any man had ever gotten the drop on him to put him on his back.

With a loud clip his powerful jaws came together, powdering the edges of his perfect teeth and swelling the great muscles of his face and neck until they stood out like bands of iron.

His eyes saw the jackals and the hyenas, the vultures and the graveyard ghouls—the tools, the fangs of Capitalism—rushing him and snarling at him from all sides; but he did not fear them. They were but straws in his hands, to fall before his might like

reeds in the path of the cyclone. Other eyes there were which saw other sights—other visions—the objects of other days. They were the inverted eyes of his mental processes looking back into the vistas of the past, to see fond mothers weeping over tiny mounds of fresh heaped earth. They saw long processions of black-garbed mourners following some loved one to this self-same place of final rest. They reviewed again the double funeral of his father and mother, the one fair of face and hair, with slender white hands folded on her maternal breast; the other huge, scar-featured, and with a folded armless sleeve—armless as it had come back from Gettysburg. And then they turned to her—his Erma! His lips moved, shaped her treasured name piteously and hopelessly, like the cry of one death-struck, alone and sinking in mid-ocean.

But the wolves were upon him!

The gang boss was a big young thug, husky and vicious with the viciousness that comes naturally with the unnatural environment of his foul profession. He was no mean antagonist. As Jason sprang erect, the brute made a terrific pass at him, just as the old man swung his crutches. There was a crash, and a snap like a broken staff, and the thick right arm of the burly bruiser fell limp like a wet rope at his side. Also the crutches were smashed, and with noth-

ing to balance his great weight but his good right leg, and with twelve men lashing out at him from as many angles, two of them college football champions, how long could he last?

But it was *Jason Sands* to whom they had carried the fight, and when the *Comet* arrived on the scene it was *Jason Sands* who was carrying the fight to them! There lay the gang boss, arm broken and jaw smashed. Silk hats, canes and pale faces mingled promiscuously like jack-straws with flying fists and arms within a median whirlwind of desperate conflict.

The old gladiator, rejuvenated with the power of deadly desperation, fought his last battle over the scattered remains of his dead wife's ravaged bones. He was terrible and warlike as he fought there for the outraged honor of those he loved. He looked the very reincarnation of Norsean berserker—primal and fearless—and they were falling before him like tenpins. The *Comet* scraped her springs along the turf among the white-stones, just as a giant statue with only one leg—the last on the field of strife left standing—balanced at full height, motionless and awful, his snowy locks flying in the wind, pressed two broken hands to a bloody forehead and fell like a broken column upon the bone-cluttered clay!

“Father! Father! O father, speak to me, speak, speak! Don’t you see it is I, Quimby,

your boy?" cried the frantic son, falling on the ground and taking the blood-stained head tenderly on his lap.

Everything possible was done for Jason Sands; but he expired in his son's arms where he had fallen.

With every art known to modern science he was treated, but the life skein was unraveled and they could only partially revive him.

It was a wonder that no other man was killed. But there was work for the Hard-hack Hospital when two automobiles pulled up with every mother's son a subject for treatment, including the two chauffeurs.

A pathetic and dramatic scene was enacted, when Ben Page, breathless and hatless, rushed madly among the fallen combatants vainly seeking an adversary with whom to match his strength and prowess.

Holding true to the trail, Ben had seen the last of the fight, but he had reached the battleground too late. The fury of him was unhuman! His grief was complete! Wildly he sprang hither and thither, frothing at the mouth like a mad dog, as some one or another of the hostile vanquished groaned or moved. His eyes were blood-shot, and with fists doubled into veritable mauls, he was a sight not good to look upon. He beheld his old mate fallen, and the sight fairly crazed him. As the dying

sire of the young savior of his own life opened his eyes and whispered something hoarsely, at length, to his tearful son, Ben saw in those eyes what he knew was the death glaze, and in his throat he could hear that unmistakable rattle.

As the end came, quietly, and the old tower lay prone and still at last, Ben Page fell on his knees beside him and pronounced a solemn oath. He swore to devote the remainder of his life to the great cause of Socialism. Rough woodsman that he was, and rougher still the speech of him, there was eloquence and sincerity in that pledge, nevertheless; and when he had finished, it was a tearful crew that stood with heads uncovered while Quimby Sands reverently drew down the lids and closed his father's eyes.

"Here on my bended knees 'mongst these cold bones 'n front o' this yere dead but onlicked hero," began the unlettered but honest nomad, "I solemnly swear tue never drink, smoke nor chaw, nor tue rest, nor laff, nor cuss, nor stop fightin' until this onhuman, ongodly, God-forbid and God-damned system sich as robs children of their playtime; robs homes of the purtiest dear ones; robs them that has nothin' of what they aughtter have, and that robs the graves of 'em all, is wiped out forever! I ain't much on prayer, nohow; and 'taint my cut tue cringe'n crawl, no more'n 'twar

his'n, and I ain't gettin' skittish 'bout the hereafter; but I cal'late tue wind up this yere by sayin': so help me, for I've hearn o' sich lingo years ago and 'low it's the proper gab. I'm braggin' some as how I ain't no coward, Jase, and if you could speak you could tell 'em no man ever heard me squeal; but I'm agoin' tue swear this yere oath in front o' you and God, and if I ever lay down on it I hope I may pan gravel in the burn-holes o' Hell 'till the day of kingdom come! Them low-down blacklegs has claim-jumped this yere graveyard and committed murder on as good a man as ever fit wolves or sot on a throne up yender; and if Heaven is hanted by the likes o' them there varmints, it's a part o' the same shebang, and ain't no fit place for me nohow. And now when I say it, I want tue know if any o' this outfit's with me: *So help me God—Amen!*"

And each of the *Comet's* sad party repeated, "Amen!"

As the bereaved friend and now Comrade finished, his frame shook with the quake of deepest emotion. He arose, weak and staggering. At last, he had seen it with his own eyes.

Leland Tannerhill's dream of rest and peace had vanished; and his exhumed body was lying under the roadbed down the ravine where it had been dumped along with

other ballast. It were cheaper, so, and besides it would earn dividends!

On Labor Day, there was a funeral and an oration. The sad and terrible news had been flashed throughout the nation, and a multitude was there. Upon a granite pyre in the centre of the park rested, in full view of the vast throng, the cold remains of Jason Sands. Thousands of the new airships surrounded the park, and when the funeral oration was begun by Quimby Sands that evening, their powerful light rays spread out over the woods and over the lake, tinted, tuned, and with mordant auroral lustre.

“This is the happiest, and the saddest moment of my life!” Thus spake the young giant oak, as he began the funeral oration of his fallen sire before him. “It is the saddest, because it marks the hour when I shall look for the last time upon my father’s face; and it is the happiest, for the reason that it heralds the beginning of the end—the end of the reign of hell on earth.

“Look upon him, my father. He was a man. His father was a man and his mother was a woman. On the bountious bosom of Mother Nature they had their habitation; and they came and went with the freedom of the birds and of the wind. They planted seeds; and they ate the things that grew out of the earth. Agrarians were they, sniffing the pure ozone with the first gray of dawn;

and sleeping like mountains when the hour was dark, they grew like trees, and like trees they have fallen.

“Jason Sands has come and gone; and because of his coming the world doth smile. He came with the breath of the morning; and he sleeps 'mid the perfume of the night. He arose and stood on the mountain and heard the soft whisper of love. Then he obeyed the law. That law has been repealed; and to-day the dollar sign is ruling king on a throne of dross. Love is still in chains.

“He loved his fellows, but his fellows slew him. He lived for the love of life; and he fought for the love that life gave him.

“The scion of a long line of hardy pioneers, he was a giant and a born rebel. He was a rebel against injustice, ignorance, and slavery in all their thousand-and-one horrible forms. It was said of him, by the eminent poet and philosopher, Walter Hurt, that he was the ‘reincarnated spirit of the French Revolution.’ Whereupon he had replied: ‘I have rebelled against the criminal codes of Capitalism’s political, economic, educational, social and moral systems, and the reeking hag, Society, has frowned on me. I cut myself loose from the bonds of her orthodox apron-strings, and so I am an ‘heretic!’ I have dared to speak my mind concerning the rights of free-born citizenship; and for this

the painted harlot of their Social Harem seeks to have me ostracized. I am disinherited, starved and driven out from my own door. I had the audacity to trace the printed page back over the bloody battle-fields of their holocausts, called war, and to delve into and uncover the putrid carnalfests of their alleged marital sanctity; and I flung the dripping clout of their polluting hypocrisies in their sniveling faces. Is it any wonder, then, that I am an exile? Is it not a wonder that I am permitted to live?"

"But Jason Sands was born in the nineteenth century, when hypocracy of religious faith gave respectability to social prostitution; when economic security consisted in one's ability to stand firmly on the slender neck of a weaker brother; when the aristocracy of moral well-being was achieved only by those who could manage to climb nearest the throne of lawful outlawry, whose symbol was the lying legend, gripped in the talons of a baldheaded bird of prey: 'In God We Trust.' And which brigand tyranny reigned supreme because its slaves were too ignorant to perceive that they were slaves!"

"From a phrenological reading given as a demonstration before a class of 5,000 students at a college of mental science at Bryn Mohr, Washington, by Prof. Knox, his chart read: Mental-motive; aggressive-

ness; perceptive faculties leading; mechanics; art; poetry; literature; actor; public speaker; author; organizer, teacher, etc. In any and all of which he should have achieved perfection and success; but having been born in the nineteenth century under Capitalism, all these fine qualities and natural characteristics were so much merchandise, he told Prof. Knox, and subject to the fluctuations of market values. They were assets only for commercial exploitation, and negotiable only to usurers in time of great feasting and waste called prosperity. Talent was bought and sold like harness leather and votes; and genius was drowned out in the sweat of poverty and toil.

“This nature man quarreled with a civilization which scared the race through the world with the Ghost of Starvation in life, and the fear of damnation ever afterwards. In a world of sunshine and plenty, he could see no sane reason why ninety and nine must perish miserably that one might live idly.

“While speaking on the streets of St. Louis he was set upon and clubbed by the uniformed thugs called policemen of that ‘holy’ city. In answer to a question before the official Thug Judge next morning, he said: ‘I must speak out. I can look no longer with complacency and high-browed unconcern upon the garbage-heaps of human wreckage strewn throughout the land. The

scrap-piles of wornout working men, women and children, too old or useless for profitable service and therefore no longer saleable, are thrown out on the industrial dump to starve. It is a crying disgrace, and a shame to any nation prating of civilization. These people with red blood in their veins are a part of me and I am a part of them. Their fight is my fight and my fight theirs!"

"For this fine display of obstreperous assumption, he was fined for contempt of court and sentenced to thirty days on the chain gang.

"Yes, my father, Jason Sands, doing the lockstep with criminals and inebriates for having the audacity to raise his voice in protest at the wrongs of his fellowmen!

"He was sensible to the injustice of a civilization that failed to civilize. It was the *uncivil* that ruled, seeking to make civil and meek the outraged manhood that dared rebel against such official tyranny. He was quick to pick flaws in a society weighted down with creeds and screeds which harped of 'peace on earth and good will among men,' while fattening off the blighted lives of its poor. He was horrified at sight of an aristocracy of inherited stolen goods, drinking the blood of unborn generations from the Skull of Legalized Prostitution, and cramming Truth and Progress back into the teeth of Oblivion with the mailed fist of its pandering executives.

“It did not take him forty years to see that there was something wrong when those who did all the work owned nothing, and others who did no work owned everything. It was such a system that stepped between him and love, and which broke and crushed his home. It was this *dog-in-the-manger* system which stood between him and life, tying his willing hands and dogging him over the earth like an alien and an outcast. And it was this system which robbed me of my childhood and my birthright.

“It was this *system*—bear with me when I say system, for I would have you know that it were not men, but the *system*—which pursued my mother to her grave to despoil her terminant dust of its peaceful rest.

“My father was not above his class. He was of his class—the class in whose sweat and blood and tears this earth is steeped. His was the arm of a Sampson; his brain was a volcanic battery surcharged with the voltage of the heavens; but his heart was the heart of an Niobe. When danger menaced, he became a warrior and struck in battle; but his heart bled before the grief-struck visage of a weeping child. Out of defeat he wrung victory; and while cowards whined their patrimonious supplications and crawled belly down in the dust of obeisance, he stood erect and defiant, hurling condemnation and challenge into their cit-

dels of predatory wealth and power. When they fell upon him with overwhelming numbers to destroy him, he would arise from their vengeance, crushed but undefeated; and when two months hence the glad tidings of a Socialist victory heralds the birth of the Co-operative Commonwealth in America, the honor of that victory in no small measure shall belong to such as he, who dared to stand alone.

“Jason Sands early saw that there was something wrong in a society divided against itself and living in two houses. He perceived that the two houses were built, one upon the other and that all the heft was at the top! He shuddered at the sight, for he knew that such a house could not long endure. They who lived in the upper house, spent their days in idleness and debauchery; while the multitudes gasping in filth and poverty at their feet, idling never, possessed naught to call their own!

“Graded with many grades were these two houses. On the lower strata groveling rat-like among the sewers, was the grade that laid the underpinning of the lesser edifice with the layer just above boiling the flesh from its bones in the vacuum-like basements, washing the soiled linen of the fine ladies at the top. They, the mudsills, were satisfied to inhale all the germ-laden pollution of the nasty odors of these use-

less swine for a shameful dab at a more shameful chance existence of toil.

“Don’t criticize me for my seeming passion, nor censor me that my manner of speech is ungentle; the wrongs of this robber society may not be whispered gently in honied phrases, while nostrils clog with the fumes of Hell.

“Many-strata’d and many storied was this bi-housed society. Each respective strata and grade was crafted and segregated, and all interwoven, intermingled, intertwined and interdependent; but all divided on the one vital issue—life. Moreover, and O the pity of it! O the shame of it! O the crime of it! The nether house, the house of meanest slaves, passed all their labor product up to the strata of the sub-cellar slaves; and in turn the sub-cellar slaves turned it all over to the cellar slaves, with their own product added. Next the cellar slaves lifted it, swollen by their own creation, up to the grade above, and so on all the way to the dizzy height where the rich idlers squandered it wickedly on the four winds of licentious extravagance. Of course where the wealth was piled so high at the feet of their masters, a few of the meanest crumbs fell down. These the nether stratas devoured greedily like scavengers, blessing God for such crumbs, which they lauded as ‘Christian charity!’

“This my father called the ‘Bi-house of Capitalism.’ And Capitalism it was, and still is, here in America. But its doom is sealed! It is still raging and rending and sating its barbaric lust upon the heart-broken wrecks of its ruthless reign of ruin. It is the system of profit-sharing among those who do nothing profitable. It is the system which takes from those who *have not*, and give to those who *have!* It is the process whereby those burdened with fat, eat fat from the bones of the lean; and those who sweat not, drink the sweat from the faces of the weary and heavy laden. It is the instrument with which the gods of the universe are highwayed out of the world they have created, for the privilege of creating more worlds out of which to be again highwayed! *It is a political, economic, industrial, commercial, military, social, and damnable system of legalized illegality; illegal legality; lawful outlawry, and the criminal quintessence of unspeakable criminology!*”

“IT IS A SYSTEM OF MASTERS AND SLAVES!”

He paused to let it soak in.

“*Masters and slaves! Masters and slaves! A system of master and slave!*”

His hearers mouthed the words, silently, and awfully. It were not men, he showed them, but the *system* that was at fault. It was responsible for every human woe.

“There lies a victim of the system,” he resumed. “Behold its bloody handiwork! At the age of but a boy he died an old man! When Love gave birth to Jason Sands, the flowers breathed their perfume into his nostrils and the Muses smiled. When he died, a lute was riven in the great orchestra of the Cosmos.

He scorned to be a master; but he strove to be a man. He builded wherein that others might dwell; but the system gave him ‘not where to lay his head!’ He was the strongest man; but the system was stronger than he. He strove to lift his fellows up, the system struck him down! His heart beat not within his breast, but in the abode of the poor; and when his fists struck out, the blow always fell hardest upon his own heart.

“It is not I, speaking to you from this eminence. The lips are mine today; but the voice you hear is the voice of my father. Upon this granite pyre rests the silent remains of a *man*. See the hoary head! Marvel at the great statue! Think of the unknown strength, now used up in the mills of toil. He was forty-six years old when the end came, and under a sane arrangement of human society he would have lived a hundred years.

“It is not Jason Sands who lies still upon that stone! It is the Son of Toil! How

many are there among you who knew him? His name was *Legion*."

As the son ceased speaking and stepped down from his father's side, the *Comet* shot up her consuming pillar; the spectators were warned back, and down came the electro-radium ray. It had been Jason's last request as he lay in the throes of death on his son's lap in the graveyard, that he be cremated with the *Ray*. In the grave there was no rest, and so his will was obeyed. Stepping aboard the airship, the scientist gave the signal! There was a flash, and the body vanished, and the stone vanished, as his voice rang clear from above:

"My father, scion of the Brave, child of the goddess of Nature, victim of a thief regime, personification of Capitalism's disinherited poor, thy toil and thy sorrows are no more. From gas thou art, and unto gas I now return thee!"

As the *Comet* arose to go, she threw a double picture on a black cloud with her powerful projectoscope, a mile in circumference. It was the picture of a handsome young couple in ancient dress. The one broad of shoulder and with the eye of one who looks into the future; the other slender of form and fair of face. It could be seen that they were sweethearts, and that she loved him; for her white fingers were toying with his curly hair. It was the double pic-



“And where the frog-pond chorus rose dreamily o'er the sweet-scented woodland, as it had done for Erma and Jason in the days of Auld lang syne, she said: ‘Yes, dear one,’ when he whispered, ‘Ray.’ ”

ture of Erma and Jason, taken on their wedding day.

* * * *

A year came and went. The Presidential election of 1916 was a glorious event of history. It was Labor Day once again. From every flagstaff streamed a silken banner—the blood-red flag of Socialism.

Down the White House steps a tall, gaunt figure came and joined in the mighty parade. There was a broad smile upon the love-lit face, but his crown was high and bald. They knew him. For their "Gene" was an old Comrade.

The picnic in the park had ended and the throng was going home, when a beautiful young woman with cornsilk blonde hair, wound two small arms about a great strong one, raised two moist blue eyes to meet two darker hazel ones, and two forms walked peacefully among the wild flowers through the gathering twilight and into the promising future.

As the shadows came gently falling with the perfumed meadow mists, slender white fingers stole fondly through thick auburn curls; and where the frog-pond chorus rose dreamily o'er the sweet-scented woodland as it had done for Erma and Jason in the days of Auld lang syne, she said: "Yes, dear one," when he whispered, "Ray."

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